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AGGRAVATION

OF

SINNÉ and SINNING

Against

KNOWLEDGE

And

MERCIE.

Delivered in severall Sermons

upon divers Occasions.

By THO: GOODWIN B.D.



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AGGRAVATION

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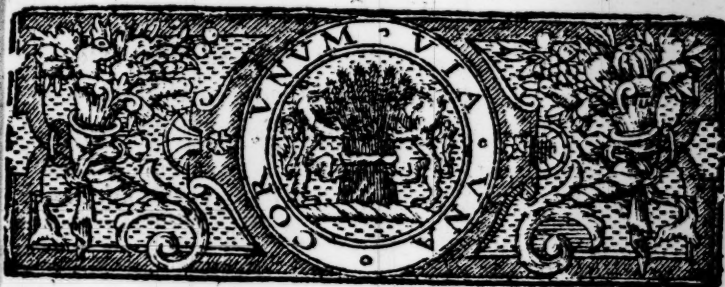
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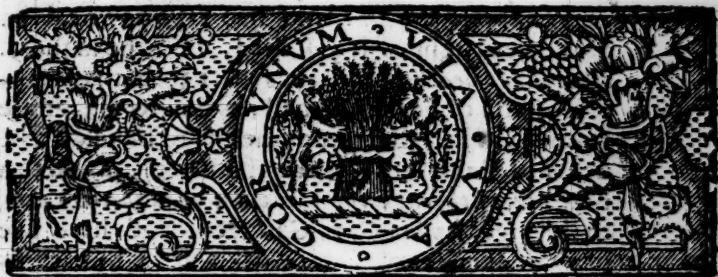
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AGGRAVATION OF SINNE.

ROM. 7. 13.

Was that then which is good made death unto mee? God forbid. But sinne, that it might appeare sin, working death in mee by that which is good; That sinne by the commaundement might become exceeding sinfull.



EE finde our Apostle in the 9. verse to have been alive, but struck upon the sudden dead, by an apparition presented to him, in the glasse of the Law, of the sinfulness of sinne. Sin revived, layes the 9. verse, appeared to be
B sinne,

sinne, sayes the 13. verse, lookes but like it selfe, *above measure sinfull*: and hee falls downe dead at the very sight of it; I dyed, sayes he in the 9. *it wrought death in me*, sayes the 13. that is, an apprehension of death and hell, as due to that estate I was then in. But yet as the life of sinne was the death of Paul, so this death of his preparation to a new life, *I through the Law am dead to the Law, that I might live to God Gal. 2. 19.* and here hee likewise speakes of Gods worke upon him at his first conversion; for then it was that he relates how sin became in his esteeme, *so above measure sinfull.*

The subject then to be insisted on, is the sinfulness of sinne, a subject therefore as necessary as any other, because if ever we be saved, sinne must first appeare to us all, as it did here to him, *above measure sinfull.*

And first, because all knowledge begins at the effects which are obvious to sense, and interpreters of the nature of things, therefore wee will begin this *Demonstration* of the evill sinne, from the mischievous effects it hath filled the world withall, it having done nothing but wrought mischief since it came into the World, & all the mischief that hath beene done, it a lone hath done, but especially towards the poore soule of man, the miserable subject of it.

Which first it hath debased the soule of man, he noblest creature under heaven, and highest allyed; made to be a companion fit for God himselfe, but sinne hath stript it of its first native excellency, as it did Reuben, *Gen. 49. 41.* debased the soule more worth than all the world, as Christ himselfe saith, that onely went to the price of it; yet sinne
hath

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hath made it a drudge and slave to every creature it was made to rule : Therefore the Prodigall as a type is said to *serve swine, & feed on Huskes*, so as every vanity masters it. Therefore we finde in Scripture, that men are said to be *servants to wine, Tit. 2. 3. servants to riches, & divers lusts, &c.*

And hence it is that shame attends upon it, *Rem. 6. 21.* Now, shame ariseth out of an apprehension of some excellencie debased : And by how much the excellencie is greater, by so much is the shame the greater, and therefore unutterable confusion will one day befall sinners; because sinne is the debasement of an unvaluable excellencie.

Secondly, it not onely debaseth it, but defiles it also; and indeed there was nothing else that could defile it, *Mat. 15. 20.* for the soule is a most pure beame, bearing the image of the *Father of Lights*; as farre surpassing the sunne in purenesse, as the sunne doth a clod of Earth; and yet all the dirt in the world cannot defile the sunne; all the clouds that seeke to muffle it, it scatters them all: but sinne hath defiled the soule, yea one sinne, the least defiles it, in an instant, totally, eternally.

First, one sinne, did it in the fall of *Adam, Rom. 5. 17.* one offence polluted him, and all the world. Now, suppose you should see one drop of darknesse seizing on the sunne, and putting out that light and eye of heaven, and to loosen it out of the orbe it moves in, and cause it to drop downe a lump of darknesse, you would say it were a strange darknesse, This sinned then in the soule, to which yet the sunne is but as a Tapor.

Secondly, it defiles it thus in an instant. Take the most glorious Angell in Heaven, and let one of

the least finnes seaze upon his heart, he would in an instant fall downe from Heaven, stript of all his glory, the ugliest Creature that ever was beheld; you would count that the strongest of all poysons, that would poyson in an instant; as Nero boiled a poyson to that height, that it killed *Germanicus* as soone as he received it; Now such a one is sinne.

Thirdly, sinne defiles it *totally*; it rests not in one member onely, but beginning at the understanding, eates into the wil & affections, soaks through all. Those diseases we account strongest, which seaze not on a joynt or a member only, but strikes rottennesse through the whole body.

Fourthly, it defiles *eternally*, it being *aterna macula*, a staine, which no nitre or sope, or any creature can wash out; *Ier. 2. 21.* There was once let in a deluge of water, and the world was all overflow'd with it, it washed away sinners indeed, but not one sinne. And the world shall be a fire againe at the latter day, and all that fire, & those flames in Hell that follow, shall not purge out one sinne.

Thirdly, it hath robbed the soule of the *image of God*, deprived us of the glory of God, *Rom. 3. 23.* the image of Gods holinesse, which is his beauty and ours: we were beautifull & all glorious once within, which though but an accident, is more worth then all mens soules devoid of it, it being a likenesse unto God, a divine nature, without which no man shall see God. Though man in Innocency had all perfections united in him, *via eminentie*, that are to be found in other Creatures; yet this was more worth than all; for all the rest made him not like to God, as this did, without which all Paradises could not make *Adam* happy; Which when he had
lost,

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lost, he was left *naked*, though those his other perfectiōs remained with him; which is *profitable for all things*, as the Apostle sayes. The least dramme of which, the whole world emballanced with, would be found too light; without which the glorious Angels would be damned devils, the Saints in Heaven, damned Ghosts, this it hath robbed man off.

Fourthly, it hath robbed man even of God himselfe: *Your sinnes seperate* (sayes God) *betwixt you and me*: And therefore they are said to *live without God in the world*: and in robbing a man of God; it robs him of all things; For *all things are ours*, but so farre as God is ours; Of God whole face makes Heaven, he is all in all; *His loving kindnesse is better than life*, and containeth beauty, honours, riches, all; Yea they are but a drop to him.

But its mischief hath not staid here, but as the *Leprosie of the Lepers* in the old Law, sometimes infected their houses, garments; So it hath hurld confusion over all the World, brought a *vanitie* on the Creature, *Rom. 8 23.* and a *curse*; And had not Christ, underooke the shattered condition of the World to uphold it, it had fallen about *Adams* eares.

And though the old walls and ruinous pallace of the world stands to this day, yet the beauty, the glosse, and glory of the hangings is soyled and marred with many imperfections cast upon every Creature.

But as the House of the Leper was to be pulled downe, and Traitors houses use to be made jakes; so the world (if Christ had not stept in) had shrunke into its first nothing; And you will say, that is a

strong carrion that retaines not onely infection in it selfe. but infects all the aire about; So this, that not the soule the subject of it onely, but all the World.

Lastly, it was the first founder of Hell, and laid the first corner stone thereof; sinne alone brought in, and filled that bottomlesse gulfe with all the fire, and brimstone, and treasures of Wrath, which shall never be burnt and consumed. And this crucified and pierced Christ himselfe, poured on him his Fathers wrath, the enduring of which for sinne, was such, as that all the Angels in heaven had cracks and sunke under it.

But yet this estimate is but taken from the effects of it, the essence of it which is the cause of all these evils, must needs have much more mischief in it. Shall I speake the least evill I can say of it? It contains all evils else in it: Therefore James 1. 23. the Apostle calls it *filthinesse, and abundance of superfluity, or excrement* as it were, of naughtinesse. *utrinque utriusque*. As if so transcendent, that if all evils were to have an excrement, a scumme, a superfluitie, sinne is it, as being the abstracted quintessence of all evill. An evill, which in the nature and essence of it *virtually & eminently*, contains all evils of what kinde soever that are in the world; Insomuch as in the Scripurer you shall finde that all the evils in the World, serve but to answer for it, and to give names to it. Hence sinne it is called *poyson*, and sinners *serpents*: sinne is called *a vomit*, sinners *dogs*; sinne the stench of graves, and they *Rotten sepulchres*; sinne *mire*, sinners *swines*; and sinne *darknesse blindnesse, shame, nakednesse, folly, madnesse, death*, whatsoever is filthy,

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thv, defective, infective, painfull. Now, as the Holy Ghost sayes of Nabal, *as is his name, so is he*; so may wee say of sinne; For if Adam gave names to all things, according to their nature; much more God, *who calls things as they are*. Surely, God would not slander sinne, though it be his only enemy. And besides, there is reason for this, or it is the cause of all evils, God sowed nothing but good seed in the world; *he beheld, & saw all things were very good*. It is sinne hath sowne the tares; all those evils that have come up, sorrowes and diseases, both unto men and beasts. Now, whatsoever is in the effects, is *via eminentiæ* in the cause. Surely therefore it is to the soule of man (the miserable vessell and subject of it) all that, which poyson, death, & sicknesse is unto the other creatures, and to the body; and in that, it is all these to the soule, it is therefore more than all these to it; for *corruptio optimi pessima*: by how much the soule exceeds all other Creatures, by so much must sinne, which is the corruption, poyson, death, and sicknesse of it, exceed all other evils.

But yet this is the least ill that can be said of it. There is 2. some further transcendēt peculiar mischief in it, that is not to be found in all other evils, as will appeare in many instances.

For first, all other evils God proclaimes himselfe the author off, and owne them all; though sinne be the meritorious cause of all, yet God the efficient & disposing cause. *There is no evill in the Citie but I have done it*. He onely disclaimeth this, *I am I. 13.* as a bastard of some others breeding, for *he is the Father of Light, ver. 17.*

B 4

Secondly,

Secondly, the utmost extremity of the evill of punishment God the Sonne under-went, had a cup mingled him of his Father, more bitter than if all the evils in the world had beene strained in, and he dranke it off heartily to the bottome ; But not a drop of sinne, though sweetned with the offer of all the world;; would goe downe with him.

Thirdly; other evils the *Saints* have chosen and imbraced as good ; and refused the greatest good things the world had ; as evill, when they came in competition with sinne. So *Moses chose rather to suffer, much rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin; Heb. 11. from 24. to 28.* So *Chrysostome* when *Eudoxia* the Empreſſe threatned him : Goe tell her (sayes he) *Nil nisi peccatum timeo.*

Fourthly ; take the Devill himſelfe, whom you all conceive to be more full of miſchiefe than all the evils in the world , called therefore in the abstract *spirituall wickedneſſe; Eph. 6. 12.* yet it was but sinne that firſt ſpoyled him ; and it is sinne *poſſeſſeth* the very Devils : He was a glorious Angell till he was acquainted with it ; and could there be a ſeparation made betweene him and sinne , hee would be againe of as good, ſweet, and amiable a nature, as any creature in Earth or Heaven.

Fiftly; Though other things are evil, yet nothing makes the creature *accuſed* but sinne; as all good things in the world doe not make a man a bleſſed man, ſo nor all the evils accuſed. God ſayes not : bleſſed are the honorable and the rich, nor that accuſed are the poore; but *curſed is the man that continues not in all things; Gal. 3. 10.* a curſe to the leaſt sinne; and on the contrary: *Bleſſed is the man whoſe iniquities are forgiven; &c. Rom. 4. 7.*

Sixtly; God hates nothing but sinne. Were all evils swept downe into one man, God hates him not simply for them, not because thou art poore and disgraced, but onely because sinfull. It is sin he hates; *Rev. 2. 15. Isa. 27. 11* yea it alone; and whereas other attributes are diversely communicated in their effects to severall things; as his love and goodnesse; Himselfe, his Sonne, his Children, have all a share in; yet all the hatred (which is as large as his love) is solely poured out upon; and wholly; and limited only unto sinne.

All the question will bee what transcendencie of evill is in the essence of it, that makes it above all other evils, and hated; and it only by God, Christ, the Saints, &c. more than any other evill.

Why? It is *enmity with God*; *Rom. 8. 7.* abstracts we know speake essences; the meaning is, it is as directly contrary to God, as any thing could be; For contrary it is to God, and all that is his.

As 1. contrary to his essence, to his existence, and being God: for it makes men hate him, *Rom. 1. 30.* and *as he that hateth his brother is a murderer*; *1. Ioh. 3. 15.* so hee that hateth God may bee said to be a murderer of him, and wisheth that he were not. *Peccatum est Dei-cidium.*

2. Contrary it is to all his attributes which are his name: Men are jealous of their names; Gods name is himselfe; as 1. It makes a man slight Gods goodnesse; and to seeke happinesse in the creature, as if he were able to be happy without him. And 2. it deposeth his soveraignity; & sets up other Gods before his face. 3. It contemns his truth.

power, and justice. And 4. turnes his grace into wantonnesse.

And as to himselfe, so to what ever is his, or deare to him. Besides, A King hath 3. things in an especiall manner deare to him: *His Lawes*, *His favourites*, *his images stampt upon his coine*, and so hath God.

First, his Lawes and Ordinances: God never gave Law, but it hath beene broken by sinne; *sinne* is the definition of it, *The transgression of the Law*, 1 Ioh. 3. 4. yea it is called destroying the Law, Psal. 119. 126. And know, that Gods Law, the least title of it, is more deare to him than all the World. For ere the least title of it shall bee broken, Heaven and earth shall passe. The least sin therefore, which is a breach of the least Law, is worse than the destruction of the World; and for his worship, (as envying God should have any,) it turnes his Ordinances into sinne.

Secondly, for his favourites: God hath but a few poore ones; upon whom because God hath set his love, sinne hath set its hatred.

Lastly, for his image even in a mans owne breast: The law of the members fights against the Law of the mind, and endeavoureth to expell it, though a man should be damned for it. Gal. 5. 17. *The flesh* (namely sinne) *lusteth against the Spirit*, for they are contraries. Contrary indeed; for me thinkes though it hates that image in others, that yet it should spare it in a mans selfe, out of selfe-love; but yet, though a man should be damned, if this image be expelled, it yet labourerh to doe this; So deadly is that hatred, a man hates himselfe, as holly, so farre as he is sinfull.

It abounds now so high, as our thoughts can follow it no farther: *Divines* say, it aspires unto infinity, the object against whom it is thus contrary, unto, being God, who is infinite, they tell us, that objectively sinne it selfe is infinite. Sure I am, the worth of the object or party offended, aggravates the offence: an ill word against the King is high treason, not the greatest indignity to another man. Sure I also am, that God was so offended with it, that though he loves his Sonne as himselfe, yea he (though *without sinne*) being but *made sinne* by imputation; yet God *spared him not*; and because the Creatures could not strike a stroake hard enough, he himselfe was *pleased to bruiſe him*; *Eſay. 53. 16. He spared not his owne Sonne*, *Rom. 8. 32.* His love might have overcome him, to have passed by it to his Sonne; at least a word of his mouth might have pacified him; yet so great was his hatred of it, and offence at it, as he powred the vials of his wrath on him: Neither would entreaty serve, for *though he cryed with strong cries it should passe from him*; God would not, till he had out-wrestled it.

And as the person offended, aggravates the offence, as before; so also the person suffering, being God and Man, argues the abounding sinfulness of it. For, for what crime did you ever heare a King was put to death? Their persons being esteemed in worth above all crime, as civill. Christ was the *King of Kings*.

And yet there is one consideration more to make the measure of its iniquity fully full, and to abound to flowing over; and that is this, that the least sinne virtually more or lesse contains all sinne in

in the nature of it (I meane not that all are equall, therefore I adde more or lesse) and I prove it thus: because *Adam* by one offence contracted the staine of al, no sooner did one sinne seaze upon his heart, but he had all sinnes in him.

And so every sinne in us by a miraculous multiplication inclines our nature more to every sinne than it was before: it makes the pollution of nature of a deeper dye; not onely to that species of sinne; whereof it is the proper individuall act, but to all else; as bring one candle into a roome; the light spreads all over; And then another, the light is all over more increased; So it is sinne; for the least cuts the soule off from God; and then it is ready to goe a whoring after every vanity that will entice it, or entertaine it.

And this shewes the fulnesse of the evill of it, in that it containes not onely all other evils in the world in it, but also all of its owne kinde. As you would count that a strange poyson, the least drop of which containes the force of all poyson in it: That a strange disease, the least infection whereof brought the body subject to all diseases; yet such an one is sinne; the least making the soule more prone and subject to all.

And now you see it is a perfect evill; and though indeed it cannot be said to be the chiefeest in that full sense wherein God is said to bee the chiefeest good; Because if it were as bad as God is good, how could he pardon it, subdue it, bring it to nothing as he doth? And then how could it have addition to it, one sinne being more sinfull than another? *Ezek. 8. 15. Iob. 19. 11.* But yet it hath some analogie of being the chiefeest evill

evill, as God the chiefest good.

For 1. as God is the chiefest good, who therefore is to be loved for himselfe; and other things but for his sake; so also is sinne the chiefest evill, because it is simply to be avoyded for its selfe; but other evils become good, yea desirable when compared with it.

Secondly, as God is the chiefest good, because he is the greatest happinesse to himselfe; So sinne, the greatest evill to it selfe; For there can be no worle punishment of it, than its selfe; Therefore when God would give a man over, as an enemy he meanes never to deale withall more, he gives him up to sinne. And thirdly, it is so evill, as it cannot have a worse *Epithete* given it, than it selfe; and therefore the Apostle, when he would speake his worst of it, and wind up his expression highest, *usque ad hyperbolem*, calls it by its own name, sinfull sinne, *ἀμαρτωλὸς ἀμαρτία*, Rom. 7. 13. that as in God being the greatest good, *quicquid est in Deo est Deus ipse*, therefore his attributes & names are but himselfe; *idem predicatur de seipso*; So it is with sinne, *quicquid est in peccato, peccatum est*, &c. he can call it no worle than by its owne name, sinfull sinne.

Vse. And what have I beene speaking of all this while? Why? but of one sinne in the generall nature of it. There is not a man here, but hath millions of them; as many as the sands upon the Sea shore; yea, as there would be Atomes, were all the world pounded to dust, it exceeds in number also; And therefore ere we goe any further, let all our thoughts break off here in wonderment at the abounding of sinne, above all things else; for other things, if they be great, they are but a few; if many

many, they are but small; The world, tis a big one indeed, but yet there is but one. The sands, though innumerable, yet they are but small; your finfulness exceeds it both.

And next, let all our thoughts be wound up to the most deepe and intense consideration of our estates; for if one sinne abounds thus, what tongue can expresse, or heart can conceive their misery, who to use the Apostles phrase, *1 Cor. 15. are yet in their sinnes?* That is, stand bound to God in their owne single bond onely; to answer for all their sinnes themselves; and cannot, in the estate wherein yet they stand of impenitency and unbelief, plead the benefit of Christs death, to take off and ease them of the guilt of one sinne, but all their sinnes are yet all their owne, which to a man in Christ they are not; for his owne bonds are cancelled, and given in; and Christ entered into bonds for him, and all his sinnes translated upon him.

Now for a proper character of their estate, and suitable to this expression:

First then a mans sinnes may be said to be still his owne: When he committeth sinne, *out of his owne*; that is the full frame and inclination of his heart. Thus the devill is said to sinne; *Ioh 8. 44. he is out of his owne*; the whole frame of his spirit is in it; which a man in Christ cannot be so fully said to doe, for he hath a new creature in him *that sinneth not; 1 Ioh. 3. 19.* that can say even when he sins; *It is not I, but sinne.*

And secondly, then sinne is a mans owne, when he hates it not, but loves it; *The World loves his owne*, saith Christ: *Ioh. 15. 29* and so doth a wicked man his sinne, *more than any good*, which is

Dauids Character ; Psal. 52. 3.

And thirdly, what is a mans own, he nourisheth and cherisheth; Therefore *Eph. 5. 19.* *No man hateth his owne flesh, but loveth it, and cherisheth it ; So doe men their sinnes, when they are their owne. Those great and rich oppressors; lam. 9. 5. are said to nourish their hearts in wantonnesse, & in pleasure ; as in a day of slaughter ; as living upon the Creame of sinning, and having such plenty, they pick out none but the sweetest bits to nourish their hearts withall.*

4. So what a man provides for, that is his own: So sayes the Apostle, *A man that provides not for his owne, is worse, &c.* When therefore men make provition for the flesh; as the phrase is, *Rom. 13. 14;* have their Caterers and contrivers of their lust; and whose chiefeest care is every morning, what pleasures of sinne they have that day to be enjoyed; it is a signe that their sins are their owne.

In a word; when men live in sinne; 't is the expression used; *1 Tim. 5. 6.* She that lives in pleasure, is dead while she lives. When the renews of the comfort of mens lives come in, from the pleasures of sinne; and that supplies them with all those necessities that belong to life; As when 't is their element they *drinke in like water*; their meat, they eat the bread of wickednesse: *Pro. 1. 7.* and it goes downe, and troubleth them not; Their sleepe also, they cannot sleepe till they have done or contrived some mischief, *ver. 16.* Their apparell; as when violence and oppression covers them as a garment, and pride compasseth them as a chaine: *Psal. 73.* their recreation also; *It is a pastime for a foole to doe wickedly,* hee makes sport & brags
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of it, *Prov. 10. 23.* yea their health, being *sick* and discontented; when their lust are not satisfied, as *Ahab* was for *Naboths* vineyard; *Amnon* grew leane when he could not enjoy his *Paramore*.

All these, as they live in their sins here, and so are dead whilest they live, and so are miserable, making the greatestt evill their chiefest good; So when they come to die (as wee all must doe one day, and how soone, and how suddenly we know not; we carry our soules, our precious soules, as precious water in a brittle glasse, soone cracked, and then we are spilt like water, which none can gather up againe; *2 Sam. 14. 14.* or but as a candle in a paper lanthorne; in clay walls, full of cranyes; often but a little cold comes in, and blowes the candle out;) and then, without a through change of heart before, wrought from all sinne, to all godlinesse, they will die in their sinnes. And all, and the utmost of all miserie is spoken in that one word; and therefore *Christ*, when he would summe up all miseries in one expression, tells the *Pharisees* they should die in their sins; *Ioh. 8. 28.*

Vse 2. And let us consider further: that if sinne be thus above measure sinfull, that *Hell* that followeth death, is then likewise above measure fearful. And so it is intimated to bee a punishment without measure; *Ier. 30. 11.* compared with *Isa. 27.* Punish them as I punish thee (sayes God to his owne) but I will punish thee in measure. And indeed, sinne being committed against God the King of Kings, it can never be punished enough. But as the killing of a King, is amongst men a crime so hainous, that no tortures can exceed the desert of it: we use to say, all torments are too little; any

any death to good for such a crime. Now *peccatum est Dei-cidium*; as I said before, a destroying God as much as in us lies; And therefore none but God himselfe can give it a full punishment; Therefore it is called *a falling into Gods hands*; Heb. 10. 31. which, as he sayes there, is *fearfull*. For if his *breath* blowes us to *destruction*, Job 4. 9. for we are but *dust heaps*; yea his *nod*, he *nods to destruction*. Psal. 80. 16. then what is the weight of his hands; even of those hands, which *span the Heavens*, and hold the *Earth in the hollow of them*? And if God take it into his hands to punish, he will be sure to do unto the full. *Sinne is mans worke*, and *punishment is Gods*, and God will shew himselfe *as perfect in his worke*, as *man in his*.

If sinne be *malum Catholicum*, as hath been said, that containes all evils in it; Then the punishment God will inflict, shall be *malum Catholicum* also; containing in it all miseries; It is a *cup full of mixture*; so called, Psal. 75. 8. as into which God hath strained the quintessence of all miseries, and the wicked of the earth must drinke the dregges of it, though it be eternity unto the bottome. And if one sin deserves a Hell, a punishment above measure, what will millions of millions doe? And we reade that every sinne shall receive a just compence, Heb. 2. 3. Oh let us then take heed of dying in our sinnes, and therefore of living in them; for we shall lie in prison till wee have paid the very utmost farthing. And therefore if all this that I have said of it will not engender answerable apprehensions of it in you, (this being but painting the road, which you can looke upon, and handle without affrightment) I wish that if without danger you could but lay

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your eares to Hell, that standing as it were behind the skreene, you might heare sin spoken of in its owne dialect by the oldest sonnes of perdition there, to heare what *Cain* sayes of murthering his brother *Abel*; What *Saul* of his persecuting *David*, and the Priests of *Iehovah*; What *Balaam* & *Achitophel* say of their cursed counsels and policies; What *Ahab* sayes of his oppression of *Naboth*; what *Judas* of treason; and heare what expressions they have, with what horrors, yellings, groanes, distractions, the least sinne is there spoken off. If God should take any mans soule here, and as he rapt *His*, into the third Heavens, where he saw grace in its fullest brightnesse; So carry any ones soule into those *Chambers of death*, as *Salomon* calls them, and leading him through all, from chamber to chamber, shew him the *visions of darknesse*, and he there heare all those bedlames cry out, one of this sinne, another of thar, and see sinne as it lookes in Hell! But there is one aggravation more of the evill and misery sinne brings upon men, I have not spoken of yet, that it blinds their eyes, and hardens their hearts, that they doe not see, nor lament their misery, till they be in Hell; and then it is too late.

Use 3. But what, doth sinne so exceed in sinfulness, and is the venome of it boyled up to such a height of mischief, that there should be no name in Heaven and Earth able to grapple with it, and destroy it? Is there no antidote, no balme in *Gilead* more soveraigne, than it is deadly? Surely yes, God would never have suffered so potent and malicious an enemy to have set foot in his dominions, but that he knew how to conquer it, and that not by punishing of it only in Hell, but by destroy-

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ing it : Only it is to potent for all the creatures to encounter with. This victory is alone reserved for *Christ*, it can die by no other hand, that he may have the glory of it ; which therefore is the top of of his glory , as mediator, and his highest title, the memory of which hee beares written in his name *JESVS*, for he shall save his people from their sinne; *Mat. 1. 21.* And therefore the Apostle *Paul* , his chiefest Herald , proclaimes this victory with a World of solemnity and triumph ; *1 Cor. 15. 36.* *Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sinne, the strength of sinne is the Law : But thanks be to God that gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ:* Which yet againe addes to the *Demonstration of the sinfulness of it* : For the strength of sinne was such , that like *Goliath* it would have defied the whole host of heaven and earth. *It was not possible the blood of Bulls and goats should take away sinne. Heb. 10. 4.* nor would the riches of the world , or the blood of men have beene a sufficient ransom: *Will the Lord be pleased with Rivers of Oyle? Shall I give my first borne for my transgression? No (sayes he) there is no proportion; for thy first borne is but the fruit of thy body, and sinne is the sinne of thy soule; Mich. 6. 7.* It must cost more to redeeme a soule than so; *Psal. 49. 9.* No , couldest thou bring rivers of reares, in stead of rivers of oyle ; Which if anything were like to pacifie God , yet are they but the excrements of thy braines; but sinne is the sinne of thy heart : yea all the righteousness that we could ever doe , cannot make amends for one sinne; for suppose it perfect , when as yet it is but

dung, *Mal. 2. 3.* and a *menstruous cloath*, yet thou oweit it already as thou art a Creature ; and one debt cannot pay another. If then wee should goe a begging to all the Angels, who never sinned, let them lay all their stock together, it would begger them all to pay for one sinne; No, it is not the merit of Angels will doe it; for sinne is the transgression, the destruction of the Law, *Psal. 109. 1.* and to the least *sin* is more worth than Heaven ; and all that is therein.

Onely , though it be thus unconquerably sinfull by all creared powers, it hath not gone beyond the price that Christ hath paid for it, the Apostle compares to this very purpose, sinne & Christs righteousness together, *Rom. 5. 15. 20.* 'T is true, sayes he, that *sinne abounds*, and that *one sinne*, *ἡ ἁμαρτία*, and instanceth in *Adams sinne*, which itaineth all mens natures to the end of the world; yet sayes hee , the gift of righteousness by Christ abounds much more: abounds to flowing over, *ὑπερπληροῦς* sayes the Apostle, *1 Tim. 1. 14.* as the sea doth above mole-hills, *Malach. 1. 14.* Though therefore it would undoe all the Angels ; yet Christs riches are unsearchable, *Eph. 3. 8.* hee hath such riches of merit, as are able to pay all thy debts the very first day of thy mariage with him , though thou hadst beene a sinner millions of yeares, afore the creation of this day; and when that is done, there is enough left to purchase thee more grace and glory than all the Angels have in Heaven: In a word, he is able to save to the utmost , all that come to God by him, *Heb. 7. 5.* let their sinnes be what they wil.

But then we must come to him , and to God by him, and take him as our Lord & King, and head,
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and Husband, as he is freely tendered, we must be made one with him, and have our hearts divorced from all our sinnes for ever. And why not now? Doe we yet looke for another Christ? and to allude to us, as *Naomi* said to *Ruth*, is there yet any more sonnes in my wombe, that they may be your Husbands? So say I, Hath God any more such sonnes? Or is not this Christ good enough? Or are we afraid of being happy to soone, in being married to him?

But yet if we will have Christ indeed (without whom we are undone) how shall we then continue in sinne, which is thus above measure sinfull? No not in one. The Apostle speaks there in the language of impossibility & inconstancie. Christ, and the raigne of one sinne, they cannot stand together.

And indeed, we will not so much as take Christ, untill first wee have seene more or lesse this vision here, and sinne appear to us, as to him, above measure sinfull; naturally we slight it and make a mock of, and account it precisenesse to stick and make conscience of it; but if once sinne thus appears to any but in its owne colours, that man will looke upon the least sinne then, as upon Hell it selfe; and like a man affrighted, feare in all his wayes, least he should meet with sinne, and starts at the very appearance of it; Hee weepes if sinne doe but see him, and he doe but see it in himselfe and others, and cries out as *Joseph* did, How shall I doe this & sinne? and then a man will make out for Christ, as a condemned man for life, as a man that can no longer live, oh give me Christ, or else I die; & then if upon this Christ appears to him, & manifests him self, as his promise is to the that seek him, *Iob. 14. 20*

His heart thereupon will much more detest and loathe it : He saw it evill afore , but then it comes to have a new tincture added, which makes it infinitely more sinfull in his eyes; for he then looks upon every sinne as guilty of Christs blood, as dyed with it, though covered by it ; *the grace of God appearing , teacheth us to deny all ungodlines and worldly lusts.* The love of Christ constraines him. Thinkes he , Shall I live in that for which Christ died ? Shall that be my life, which was his death ? Did he that never knew sinne , undergoe the torment for it ; and shall I be so unkind as to enjoy the pleasure of it ? No; but as *David* when he was very thirstie, & had water of the well of *Bethleem* brought him, with the hazard of mens lives, powdered it on the ground ; for sayes hee; *It is the blood of these men ;* So sayes hee, even when the cup of pleasures is at his very lips ; It cost the blood of Christ, and so powrs it upon the ground. And as the love of Christ constraines him, so the power of Christ doth change him. Kings may pardon Traytors , but they cannot change their hearts; But Christ pardons none , he doth not make new creatures, and all *old things passe away*, because he makes them friends, favourites to live with , and delight in; and if men put on Christ, and have learned him, as the truth is in Iesus , they put off as concerning the former conversation the old man , with the deceitfull lusts ; and he ceaseth from sinne, that is, from the course of any knowne sin: They are the Apostles owne words, which shall judge us; and if we should expect salvation from him upon any other termes, we are deceived; for *Christ is author of salvation to them only that obey him ; Heb. 5.9.*

AGGRAVATIONS OF SINNING

Against Knowledge.

ROM. 1. 21.

Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankfull, but became vaine in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkned.

THere are two generall aggravations the Apostle insists on, in these two Chapters of the Gentiles sinfulness: First, their *unthankfulness*; ver. 21. in *despising the riches of Gods goodness*; Chap. 2. 4. Secondly; of *Rebellion*, in *sinning against knowledge*: That *when they knew him, they glorified him not as God*. And of all other, he inculcaterh this of *sinning against knowledge*, as the greatest; for bringing in a long, large, and particular indictment of many severall finnes, *Idolatry*; ver. 23. *unnaturall uncleanness*; ver. 26. &c. and all kinds of *unrighteousness*; ver. 29. hee doth both in the beginning and end of the bill, bring in this aggravation, that *they sinned against knowledge in all these*. So ver. 18. hee begins the indictment and promulgation of Gods wrath above all for this, that *they withheld the truth in unrighteousness*; which was as all that unrighteousness committed, barely in it selfe considered; And then againe in the end,

when he comes to pronounce sentence, he comes in with this, after all particulars had beene reckoned up; *Who knowing the judgement of God against those which doe such things, yet doe them.*

Doct. So that this Doctrine is cleare from hence, That to sinne against knowledge, either in omitting good duties, which wee know wee ought to performe, or committing of sinnes wee know wee ought not to doe, is the highest Aggravation of sinfulness.

I put both in both sinnes of omission and commission: for so the particular sinnes the *Gentiles* are taxed for here, are of both sorts: as *not glorifying or worshipping God*, as well as *turning his glory into a lye*, &c. to omit prayer, when your consciences tell you, you ought to doe it: to omit holy discourse, examining the heart, when you know you ought to doe them, are as well sinnes against knowledge, as to tel a lie against your knowledge, or as to steale & forswear, or murder, or be drunke, &c.

Now, when I say, it is an aggravation to these sinnes, my meaning is this: That take any sinne thou thinkest most grosse, and view it barely in the act of it, put the act nakedly in the one scale, be it a sinne of uncleanness, or drunkenness; and then put this circumstance which was added to it in the scale, that before and when thou diddest it, thou knewest it to be a sinne, this alone weighs as much, yea more then the sinne it selfe doth: that as it is said of *Herod*, that hee added this to all his other sinnes, that he cast *Iohn* in prison, who told him of his *Herodias*; and so is made as much as all his former sinnes; so is this brought in here, that in and

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unto al their unrighteousnesse, this was added, they with-held the truth, the light of their consciences (which is as a Prophet from God) they did imprisonment in unrighteousnesse, *ver. 18.* And therefore when *Daniel* would convince *Balthazar* of his deservednesse to lose his Kingdom, & that he was not able to *hold weight in the ballance, Dan. 5. 22.* what puts he into the other scale against him to weigh him up, and to shew he was *too light, ver. 21. 22?* He tels him how his *father knew the God of Heaven*, and how that his knowledge cost him seven yeares the learning among wild beasts, and thou (sayes he) his sonne knewest all this, and yet didst not humble thy selfe. Here is the aggravation weighs downe all; He knew the God of Heaven, against whom he sinned, and that judgement on his Father for his pride; and then withall he tels him, that this God, in whose hands is thy breath, and all thy wayes, thou hast not glorified. I name this place among many others; because it is parallel with this in the Text. Ile name no more; but give *Reasons & Demonstrations* for it.

First, Demonstrations.

The greatnesse of this kinde of sinning might many wayes be made appeare, we will demonstrate it onely by comparing it with other kinds of sinning.

To sinne, though out of *simple ignorance*, when that ignorance is but the *causa sine qua non* of sinning, that is, so as if a man had knowne it a sin, he had not done it, doth not yet make the fact not to be a sinne, though it lesseneth it, For *Luke 12. 48.* He that did not know his Masters will, was beaten,

when the thing committed was worthy of stripes, though he did not know so much; because the thing deserves it. And the reason is, because the Law being once promulged; as 1. to *Adam* it was, and put into his heart, as the common ark of mankinde; Though the Tables be lost, yet our ignorance doth not make the Law of none effect. For the Law of nature for ever binds; that is, all that was written in *Adams* heart, because it was thereby then published in him, and to him for us. But positive Lawes, as I may call them, as to beleeve in *Christ*, &c. a new delivered, bind not, but where they are publisht. *Iosiah* rent his clothes, when the booke of the Law was found, because the Ordinances were not kept, although they had not knowne the Law of many yeares; yet because they ought to have knowne it, therefore for all their ignorance, he feared wrath would come upon all *Israel*. So also *Lev. 5. 17.* finnes of ignorance were to be sacrificed for; yet however, it lesseneth the sinne, therefore *he shall be beaten with few stripes.*

And sure, if ignorance lesseneth them, knowledge aggravates; For *contrariorum eadem est ratio*: Therefore *he that knowes, shall be beaten with many stripes.* Yea such difference is there, that God is said to wink at sins of ignorance. *Acts 17. 30.* The time of this ignorance God winks at. Whiles they had no knowledge, God tooke no notice; yea and he abates something for such finnes, because the Creature hath a Cloake, hath something to say for its selfe; (as *Christ* sayes; *Ioh. 15. 22.*) but when against knowledge, they have no cloak. Yea farther, *Christ* makes a sinne of ignorance to be

be no sinne, in comparison ; So there , *If I had not spoken and done those workes never man did, they had [no sinne.]* (That is) none in comparison, but now they have no Cloak , no shelter to award the stripes, or plea to abate of them.

And that you may see the ground of this vast difference betweenne sinnes of ignorance , and against knowledge, consider first, that if a man sinne (suppose the act the same) out of *ignorance* meerly , there may be a supposition , that if hee had knowne it, he would not have done it ; and that as soone as he doth know it , he would or might repent of it. So *1. Cor. 2.8.* If they had knowne, they had not crucified the Lord of Glory. The like sayes Christ of Tyre, Sidon, & Gomorrah, that if the same things had beene done in them , they would have repented. But now when a man knowes it afore , and also considers it in the very committing it , and yet doth it , then there is no roome for such a supposition, and lesse hope. For what is it that should reduce this man to repentance ? Is it not his knowledge ? Now if that had no power to keepe him from his sinne, then it may be judged, that it will not be of force to bring him to repentance for it ; for by sinning the heart is made more hard, and the knowledge and the authority of it weakned and lessened , as al power is, when contemned and resisted, *Rom. 1. 21.* Their foolish heart becomes darker. *Aristotle* himselfe hath a touch of this notion in the third of his *Ethicks*, that if a man sinne out of *ignorance*, when he knowes it, he repents of it ; if out of *passion*, when the passion is over , hee is sorry for what he hath done : but when a man sinnes deliberately , and
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out of knowledge, it is a signe he is fixed and set in mischief; and therefore it is counted wickednesse and malice. And hence it is, that those that have beene *enlightned* with the highest kind of light, but that of saving grace, *Heb. 6. 4. 5.* and *Heb. 10.* If they sinne wilfully after such a knowledge of the truth, God lookes on them, as those that will never repent. And therefore likewise the schoole gives this as the reason why the Devills sinne obstinately, and cannot repent, because of their full knowledge they sinne with; they know all in the full latitude that it may be knowne, and yet goe on.

Secondly, the vast difference that in Gods account is put betweene *sinnes of knowledge*, and of *ignorance*, will appeare by the different respect and regard that God hath to them, in the repentance he requires and accepts for them; and that both in the acts of repentance, & also in the state of grace and repentance, upon which God accepts a man, or for want of which he rejecteth him.

First, when a man comes to performe the acts of repentance, and to humble himselfe for sinne, and to turne from it, God exacteth not, that sins of ignorance should particularly be repented of. But if they be repented of but in the generall, & in the lump, be they never so great, God accepts it. This is intimated, *Psal. 19. 12.* *Who can understand his error? cleanse me from my secret sinnes:* that was confession enough. But sinnes of knowledge must be particularly repented off, and confessed; and that againe and againe, as *David* was forced for his murder and adultery, or a man shall never have pardon. Yea farther, greater difference will

appeare, in regard of the state of grace and repentance : for a man may lye in a sinne he doth not know to be a sinne, and yet be in the state of Grace as the Patriarchs in *Poligamie*, and in divorcing their wives ; But to lye in a sinne of knowledge, is not compatible with grace : but unlesse a man maintaineth a constant fight against it, hateth it, confesseth it, forsaketh it, hee cannot have mercy. This cannot stand with uprightness of heart. A friend may keepe correspondencie with one, hee suspects not to be an enemy unto his friend, and be true to his friendship notwithstanding: But if he knowes him to be an enemy, he must breake utterly with the one, if he leanes to the other.

Thirdly, yet farther in the third place, so vast is the difference, that some kind of sins committed out of & against knowledge, utterly exclude from mercy for time to come; which done out of ignorance, remained capable of, and might have obtained it ; as *persecuting the Saints, blaspheming Christ, &c.* Pauls will was as much in those acts themselves, and as hearty as those that sin against the Holy Ghost; for he was mad against the Church, and in these sins, as himselfe sayes, not sinning willingly herein only, but being carried on with fury, as hot & as forward as the *Pharisees* that sined that sinne: onely sayes he, *1 Tim. i. 13. I did it ignorantly, therefore I obtained mercie.* Though it was ignorantly done, yet there was need of mercie: but yet in that he did it but ignorantly, there was a capacity & place for mercie, which otherwise had not beene. But thus to sin after a man hath received the knowledge of the truth, shuts a man out from mercy. *Heb. 10. and there is no more sacrifice for sin, for such sins. I*

I say, such finnes as these, thus directly against the Gospell, when committed with knowledge. For sins against the Law, though against knowledge, there was an atonement, as appeares *Levit. 6.* from the 1. verse to the 8. where hee instanceth in *for-swearing*. But to persecute the Saints, and Christs truth with malice, after knowledge of it, there is no more sacrifice: Not that simply the sin is so great in the act itselſe of persecution, for Paul did it out of ignorance; but because it is out of knowledge: so vast a difference doth knowledge, & ignorance put betweene the same sinne.

And therefore indeed, to conclude this in the last place, this is the highest step of the ladder, next to turning off: the very highest but that of sinning against the Holy Ghost: which must needs argue it the highest aggravation of sinning, when it ascends so high, when it brings a man to the brink, and next to falling into the bottomlesse pit, irrecoverably. And therefore to sinne presumptuously (which is all one) and to sinne against knowledge, as appeares *Numb. 15. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30.* it being there opposed to sinning out of ignorance, (such a sinne as David did, of whom it is said, *2. Sam. 12. 9.* that he despised the word of the Lord: Which phrase also is used to expresse finnes of presumption, ver. 31. of that 15. of Numbers. To sinne, I say, presumptuously is the highest step; So in Davids account, *Psal. 19. 12. 13.* For first he prayes: Lord keepe me from secret finnes, (which he maketh sinns of ignorance) & then next he prayes against presumptuous finnes, (which, as the opposition shewes, are finnes against knowledge:) For (sayes he) if they get dominion over me, I shall not bee free

free from [that great offence.] That is, that unpardonable sinne, which shall never be forgiven; so as these are neerer it of any other; yet not so, as that every one that falls into such a sinne commits it, but he is nigh to it, at the next step to it. For to commit that sinne, but two things are required; Light in the *mind*, and Malice in the heart: not malice alone, unlesse there be Light; for then that Apostle had sinned it; So as knowledge is the Parent of it, it is after receiving the knowledge of the truth; *Heb. 10. 27. 28.*

These are the *Demonstrations* of it, the *Reasons* are

First, because knowledge of God and his wayes, is he greatest mercie, next to saving grace: Hee hath not dealt [so] with every Nation. Wherein? in giving the knowledge of his wayes; And as it is thus, so to a nation, so to a Man; And therefore Christ speaking of the gift of *knowledge*, and giving the reason why it so greatly condemneth, *Luke 12. 48.* sayes; For to whom [much] is given, much is required. As if hee had said, To know his Masters will, that is the great Talent of all other. There is a [much] in that. Thus it was in the Heathens esteeme also; They acknowledged their foolish wisdome in morall and naturall Philosophie, their greatest *excellencie*: And therefore Plato thank'd God for three things; That he was a *man*, an Athenian, and a Philosopher. And *Rom. 1. 22.* the Apostle mentions it as that excellencie they did professe. And *Salomon*, of all vanities sayes this is the best vanity, and that it exceeds folly, as light doth darknesse; *Eccles. 2.* But surely much more is the knowledge of the Law and of God, as

we have it revealed to us, this must needs be much more excellent. And so the Jewes esteemed theirs; As in this second Chapter of the Romanes, the Apostle shewes also of them, that they *made their boast of the Law, & their form of knowledge of it, and approving the things that are excellent.* And what doe the two great books of the creatures, & the word and all meanes else serve for, but to increase knowledge? If therefore all tend to this, this is then the greatest mercie of all the rest.

For secondly, God hath appointed knowledge as the immediate guide of men in all their wayes, to bring them to *salvation and repentance, for to that it leads them.* It is that same *ἡ γνῶσις*, as the Philosopher call'd it: and therefore the Law, *Rom. 7. 1. 2.* is compared to an Husband, (so farre as it is written in, or revealed in the heart) that as *an Husband is the guide of the wive in her youth,* so is the Law to the heart. And whereas *beasts are ruled by a bit and bridle*; God hee rules men by knowledge: And therefore if men be wicked, notwithstanding this light, they must needs sinne highly, seeing there is no other curbe for them, as they are men, but this if he will deale with them as men, this is the onely way; and therefore if that will not doe it, it is supposed nothing will.

It is Knowledge makes men capable of sin, which *beasts are not*; therefore the more knowledge (if men be wicked withall) the more sinne must necessarily be reckoned to them; So as God doth not simply looke what mens actions & affections are, but chiefly what their knowledge is, and accordingly judgeth men more or lesse wicked. I may illustrate this by that comparison, which I may al-

lude

lude unto: That as in *Kingdomes*, God measures out the wickednesse thereof, and so his punishment accordingly, principally, by the guides, the governors thereof, what they are, and what they doe; As in the 5. of *Ieremie*, the 4. verse it appeares; where first God lookes upon the poore people, but, he excuseth them, *these are foolish, and know not the way of the Lord*; and therefore God would have beene moved to spare the Kingdome, notwithstanding their sinnes. But from them at the 5. verse, he goes to view the Rulers, *I will get me to the great men, for these have knowne the way of the Lord*; and when he saw that *these had broken the bands*, then, *how shall I pardon thee for this?* So is it in his judgment towards a particular man; when God lookes downe upon a man, and sees him in his courses exceeding loose, and wicked, he looks first upon those rude affections in him, which are uncleane, profane, debauched, greedy of al wickednes; Ay but sayes he, *these are foolish of themselves*; but I will looke upon his understanding, and upon the superiour faculties, which are the guides of these affections, and see what they dictate to these unruly affections, to restrain them; And when hee finds that the guides themselves are enlightened, & *have knowne the way of the Lord*, and that the will and the affections, though informed with much knowledge, yet *break all bands*, then *how shall I pardon thee?* Thee, who art a knowing drunkard, & a knowing unclean person, &c. so as thus to sin, aggravates & maketh sin out of measure sinfull.

Now, that knowledge & reason is a mans guide, will further appeare by this: That even erroneous knowledge doth put an obligation, a bond, and a yee

upon a man; which can be in no other respect, but because knowledge is appointed to bee a mans guide. Thus if a man thinkes a thing (which is in it selfe *common and indifferent*) to be a *sinne*, and forbidden, (as *Rom. 14. 4.*) although the *Law* forbids it not, yet *to him it is uncleane*, though in *Christ it is not uncleane*, that is, by the *Law of Christ*. For, this his knowledge and judgement of the thing *hath to him the force of a Law* : For it propounds it to him *as a Law*, and *as from God*; which reason of *his*, God hath appointed as his *immediate guide*; and the *vill* is to follow nothing that is *evill*, which is represented to it, as *evill*; This the *Law of meere nature* in all conditions; Therefore if a man should doe an action which is in it self good, if he thought it to be *evill*, he should sinne, and so *è contra*, for he goes against the dictate of nature. So that *erroneous knowledge*, though against the *Law*, is a *law to me*, though not *per se*, yet *per accidens*. Now therefore if to goe against a false light of conscience be yet a sinne, though it proves that the commandement allowes the thing was done, and was for it, then to goe against the true light of the *Law*, how sinful is it? Again, thirdly, the knowledg of the *Law* binds the person so much the more to obedience, by how much the more he knowes it; So as though it would be a sinne, when he knowes not the *Law* to transgresse it, yet when he knowes it, it is a greater sinne. 'Tis true indeed, that *Conscience* and the *Law*, when they meet, make up but *one Law*, not two distinct Lawes; and therefore in *sinning against knowledge*, though a man doth not commit two distinct sinns, yet the knowledge of it doth adde a further degree of sinfulness

nesse to it: As a cloath is the same cloath when it is white, that it was when it is dyed with a scarlet dye, yet then it hath a dye, a *tincture* given it, which is more worth than the cloath: And so when you sinne, not knowing the Law, the sin is the same for substance, it would be if you had knowne it; yet that knowledge dyes it, makes it a *scarlet sinne*, as *Esay* speakes, farre greater and deeper in demerit then the sinne it selfe; and the ground of this is, because *Lawes then come to be in force, when they are promulged*, and made knowne: so as the more they are *promulged* and knowne, the more is the force of their binding, and so the greater guilt. Therefore *Deut. 11. 12. 3. 8.* God straitens the cords more, the binding force of the Law more upon those Jewes consciences, to whom he at the first personally with majesty had promulgated it, then upon their Children, though upon theirs also. Now if all Gods Lawes, being made knowne to *Adam*, binde us, and are in force, and this when wee know them not; then if wee doe know them, or might know them, they binde much more; and still the more clearely we know them, the obligation increaseth, and the guilt insuing with it; and the rather, because now when we come to know them, they are a new promulged, in a way of a peculiar mercie; we having defaced the knowledge of them in our fall.

Fourthly, when the Law, being knowne, is broken, there is the more contempt cast upon the Law, and the Law-giver also; and so a higher degree of sinning. And therefore *Numbers 15. 30.* Hee that sinnes out of knowledgc, is said to reproach the Lord, and to despise the Word. And therefore *Saul*

sinning against knowledge, Samuel calleth it *rebellion*, and though it were but in a small thing, yet he parallels it with witchcraft. So also *Iob 24. 13.* they are said to *rebell*, when they sinne against light; because rebellion is added to disobedience; for knowledge is an Officer set to see the Law executed, and fulfilled; And makes God present to the conscience. Therefore *Rom. 2. 14.* it is called a *vvitnesse*; and therefore in sinning against knowledge, men are said to sinne before the face of the Lord himself; now vvhat a great contempt is that? Therefore also *Psal. 50.* the hypocrites sinning against knowledge, is said to cast the Law of God behind his back; so as there is a contempt in this sinning, which is in no other.

Fifthly, the more knowledge a man sinneth against the more, the vvill of the sinner is discovered to be for sinne as sinne. Novv, *voluntarium est regula & mensura actionum moralium: vvillingnesse in sinning* is the standard and measure of finnes. The lesse vvill, the lesse sinne; So much is cut off, the lesse the will closeth with it; at least vvise so much is added, by how much the will is more in it; and therefore the highest degree of sinning is exprest to us by *sinning vvillingly*, and this after knowledge, *Heb. 10.* Now though an ignorant man commits the act as willingly, as when Paul persecuted the Church, yet he commits it not considered as sinne, till he hath the knowledge of it; but then when it is discovered to be sinne, and the more clearly it is so discovered, the will may be said to joyn with it as sin. Therefore the Apostle sayes, *To him that knowes to doe vvell, and doth it not, to him it is sinne.* *Iames 4. 17.* because by his knowledge the thing is represented as sinne; and so he closeth vvith it the more, under

under that notion and apprehension.

Sixtly, in sinning *against knowvledge*, a man *condemns himselfe*; but when out of ignorance meere-ly, the *Law* only doth condemne him. So *Rom. 2. 1.* *A man having knowvledge in that vvherein hee judgeth another, he condemneth himself.* So *Rom. 14.* Now, as *self-murder* is the highest degree of murder, and an aggravation of it; So *self-condemning* must needs be reckoned. God tooke it as a great advantage over him that hid his talent, that out of thine *ovvn mouth I vvill condemne thee, thou vvicked servant.*

The doctrine being thus proved; First, I will exp-
plaine, *vvhat it is to sin against Knowvledge.*

Secondly, I will give the *Aggravations* of it.
Thirdly, I wil give *Rules to measure sins of Knowv-
ledge* by, and the greatnesse of them in any act.

Lastly, the use of all.

For the first, what it is to sinne against know-
ledge. First, to exp-
plaine it, I premise these distin-
ctions.

The first distinction. That it is one thing to
sinne *vvith knowledge*, another thing *against
knowvledge.*

There are many finnes doe passe from a man
vvith his knowvledge, which are not *against knowv-
ledge.* This is to be observed for the removall of a
scruple, which may arise in some that are godly,
who else may be wounded with this Doctrine
through a mistake.

A regenerate man is, and must needs be supposed
guilty of *more knowvne sins*, then an *unregenerate
man*: and yet he *commits sever against Knowv-
ledge*, then he.

First, I say, he is guilty of more knowvne sinnes; For he takes notice of every sinfull disposition that is stirring in him, every by-end, every contrariety unto holinesse, deadnes to duty, reluctancie ro spirituall duties; and when regenerated, beginneth to see and know more evill by himselfe, then ever he did before; He sees, as the Apostle sayes of himself, *Rom. 7. 10. all concupiscence*: And the holier a man is, the more he discernes and knowes his sinnes; So sayes the Apostle, *Rom. 7. 18. I know that in mee dwels no good thing.* And *ver. 21. I finde when I would doe good, evill is present with me.* And *23. I see another Law.* All these, he sayes, he perceived and found daily in himselfe; and the more holy that he grew, the more he saw them. For the purer and clearer the light of Gods Spirit shines in a man, the more sinnes he knowes; He will see lusts streaming up, flying in his heart, like moates in the sun, or sparkes out of a furnace; which else he had not seene; The clearer the sun-beame is, which is let into the heart, the more thou wilt see them.

But yet in the second place, I adde, that nevertheless he sinnes lesse against knowvledge; For then wee are properly said to sinne against knowledge; when we doe take the fulfilling of a lust, or the performance of an outward action, a dutie, or the like, into deliberation and consideration, and consider motives against the sinne, or to the dutie, and yet commit that sinne, yeeld to it, and nourish that lust, and omitt that dutie: Here now we sinne not onely *with knowvledge*, but against knowledge: because knowledge stept in, and opposed us in it: comes to interrupt and prevent us; but now in those failings in dutie, and stirring of lusts in the
rege-

regenerate afore mentioned, the case is otherwise: they are committed indeed with knowledge, but not against it: For it is not in the power of knowledge to prevent them; For *motus primo primi non cadunt sub libertatem*; but yet though such finnes will arise againe & againe, yet sayes a good heart. *they must not thinke to passe uncontrouled and unseene*: Therefore let not poore soules mistake me, as if I meant, throughout this discourse, of all sins which are knowne to be finnes, but I meane such finnes as are committed against knowledge; That is, when knowledge comes and examines a sinne, in or before the committing of it, brings it to the Law, contests against it, condemnes it, and yet a man approveth it, and consenteth to it; when a dutie and a sinne are brought before knowledge, as *Barrabas* and *Christ* afore *Pilate*, and thy knowledge doth againe and againe tell thee such a sinne is a great sinne, and ought to be crucified, and yet thou cryest, let it goe; And so for the duty, it tells thee againe and againe it ought to bee submitted unto, and yet thou omittest it, and committest the sinne, choosest *Barrabas* rather then *Christ*, these are finnes against knowledge; Now such finnes against knowledge, breake a mans peace, and the more consideration before had, the more the peace is broken.

The second distinction is, that men sinne against knowledge, either *directly* or *collaterally*: *Objectively*, or *circumstantially*.

First, *directly*: When knowledge it selfe is the thing men abuse, or fight against, becommeth the object, the *terminus*, the butt and mark shot at; This is to sinne directly against knowledge it selfe.

The second way, *collaterally*, is, when knowledge is but a *circumstance* in our sinnes; so as the pleasure of some sinne (we know to be a sin) is the thing aimed at; & that our knowledg steps but in between to hinder us in it, and we commit it notwithstanding, *though we doe know it*; here knowledge is indeed sinned against, yet but *collaterally*, & as a stander by, but as a circumstance onely, shot at *per accidens concomitanter*, and by the by, as one that steps in to part a fray is smitten, for labouring to hinder them in their sinne, as the Sodomites quarrelled with Lot; they are both found in this Chapter, and therefore come fitly within the compasse of this discourse.

First, This *collaterall* kinde of sinning against knowledge is mentioned in the 21. verse, where he sayes, *They knew God, yet they glorified him not*: There knowledge is made but a circumstance of their sinning; They sinned against it but *collaterally*. But then that other kind of sinning directly against knowledge, is mentioned ver. 28. *They liked not to retaine God in their Knowledge*; That is, they hated this knowledge it selfe, so as now they did not onely love sinne, they knew to be sinne, but also they loved not the knowledge of it; So that because both are thus clearly instanced in, we will speake of both more largely.

Now, sinnes directly against knowledge it selfe are many; I will reduce the chiefe heads of them into two branches:

First, in regard of our selves.

Secondly in regard of others.

First, in regard of our selves, five wayes we may thus sin against knowledge it selfe.

First,

First, when we abuse knowledge to helpe us to sinne; as first, to plot and contrive a sin, as *Judas* plotted to betray his Master, if hee could conveniently, so the Text sayes, *Mark. 14. 11.* hee would doe it wisely; and thus those that came to intrap Christ with most cunning questions, did sinne, and those who plot against the iust, as *Psal. 37. 12.*

So secondly, when men use their wiledomes to tell a cunning lye, to cover a sinne; as *Plato* sayes, men of knowledge, *sunt ad mendacia potentiores & sapientiores*: whereas fooles, though they would lye, yet often tell truth ere they are aware.

But also thirdly, when they abuse morall knowledge, which yet, as *Aristotle* sayes, is least apt to be (I am sure should least be) abused, so as to make a shew of good pretences to cover their sins; and dissemble them, not onely by finding out some cunning artificiall colour, as *David* did in the matter of *Uriah* --- *Chance of warre* (sayes he) *falls to all alike*; But when men are so impudently hypocriticall, as to make use of religious pretexts, (as the Devill sometimes doth) as *Saul*, who pretends to *Samuel*, *I have done the will of the Lord*: and when *Samuel* told him of the cattell, *Oh, sayes he, they are for a sacrifice*; when God had expressly commanded to kill them all. But this shift shifted him out of his Kingdome, *Samuel* pronounceth him a rebel in it, *Rebellion is sin against Knowledge*, therefore he knew it. Thus also *Iezabel* coloured over the stoning of *Naboth* with a tolemne fast. So *Judas* fisherh for money with a charitable pretence, *This might have beene sold and given to the poore*. In sins against knowledge, usually the minde indeavours to find out a colour, and that provokes God

more then the sin, because we goe about to mock him. We see men cannot endure a shift, much lesse the All-knowing God, not to be mocked; and we see it is hard to convince such an one. *David* was faine to be brought to the rack, ere he would confesse, when he had a shift; and men doe seeke such shifts onely in case of sinning against conscience: for else there were no need, they would be sure to plead ignorance, as *Abimelech* did.

Secondly, when men neglect the getting & obtaining of *knowledge*, which knowledge might keep & hinder them from sinning, and might make them expert in duties. This is as much as to sinne against knowledge, although the sins be committed out of ignorance; yet that ignorance beeing through their owne default, it comes all to one: when it may be said of men, as the *Apostle* doth of the *Hebrewes*, *Chap. 5. 12.* *That for the time they have had to learne, they might have beene teachers; they had yet need be taught againe the first principles.* If a man had Apprentice, who through negligence and want of heeding, and observing what he daily sees and heares about his trade, might have got for his time much knowledg in his trade, whereby he might have saved his master much, which he now hath lost him; and rid and perfected much worke, hee daily spoiles him; such carelesse blockish ignorance it is just for his master to correct him for, and to charge on him all that waste and losse, because he might have knowne how to have done better. And therefore even they who thought ignorance in it selfe (wherein they erred) yet the neglect of knowledge upon this very ground, thought a great sinne, and that it would be

be so farre from excusing sinnes, as that it would aggravate them. So here we see these Gentiles shall not onely be reckoned with for the actuall knowledge, they had attained to, and sinned against; but also for what they might have had, and have picked out of the Creatures. For so the Apostle brings in this here in the 20. verse, that the power of God beeing clearly seene in the Creatures, they neglecting to spell and read it, so much knowledge as they might have got, God will reckon to them, and aggravate their sins by.

Thirdly, which is yet much worse, when men refuse knowledge, that they may sinne the more freely; and doe stop the eare, lest they should bee charmed: As when men are loath, and afraid, and dare not reade such a booke as discovers, or might discover that truth to them, the submission to which would prejudice them, and this to the end that they may plead ignorance of their sinne. Thus also those that assent not to truth when it comes in strongly upō them, but seek to evade it. But 1. Cor. 14. 38. when the Apostle had clearly discovered the truth in those things controverted, so as *who ever was spirituall*, or not fully blind, might see, and would acknowledge the truth, then he shuts up his discourse about them, ver. 27, *if any be ignorant, let him be ignorant: For it is wilfull, it is affected;* Hee speakes it as elsewhere, Revel. last. it is said, *Hee that is unjust, let him be unjust still:* That is, he that will be unjust, and refuseth to turne, let him goe on. This is a great sinne, for God, you see, gives such a man over: One that is but neglectfull, or dull of capacity, God will take paines with him, to reach him, and beare with him, as Christ did with his

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Disciples; but if he be wilfully ignorant, hee lets him die in his ignorance, and yet will reckon with him, as if all his finnes had bene committed against knowledge, because hee reuled to know.

The fourth is to hate the light, and to endeavour to extinguish it. This is yet much worse, when men hate the Word, and the Ministers of it, the examples of Gods people, and the light they carry with them (they shining as lights in a crooked generation, *Phil. 2.15.* and yet they hate these, as theeves doe a torch in the night, & fly against the light, as batts doe, and as the *levvies* did, *Iohn 3.20*) This Christ sayes is the great condemning sinne of all others. So these Gentiles put *Socrates* to death for reprovuing them. And thus men sinne also, when they labour to extinguish the light in their owne consciences, and like not to retaine God in their knowledge, *verse 28.* but would studie the art of forgetfulness: When men have put the candle out, & drawne the curtaines, that they may sin, & sleepe in sin more freely and securely. Thus those also sin in a higher measure, who have had a cleare conviction, that they ought to be thus strict, and ought to sanctifie the Lords day, and pray privately; but now have lost this light, and think they need not be so strict; when men *continue not* in what they *were once assured of*, as the Apostle speakes, *2 Tim. 3. 14.* these sinne against their knowledge, and are the worst of such sinners; And this estate *Aristotle* himtelle, makes *statum maligni*; the state of a wicked one, namely, when the sparkes of light are extinguisht or hated. For when any mans light is lost and turned into darknesse by sinning, then, as
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Christ sayes : *How great is that darknesse?* When good lawes are not onely not enacted and embraced, but repealed also, (it is *Aristotles* similitude, to distinguish an incontinent person, and a wicked man) this is an high kind of sinning; so of these Gentiles it is said, *their foolish heart was darkned*; They had extinguished some of that light God gave them. As some drinke away their wits, so some sin away their consciences; and thus by degrees, they first sinne away the light of the word they had, as they in *Jude*, who were religious once, and then they quench even that little sparke of nature that is left. Also verse 10. *Corrupting themselves in what they know naturally.*

Fifthly, Men sinne against knowledge yet worse, when they hold opinion against their knowledge. So many are said to doe, in *1 Tim. 4. 2.* he foretels they should speake lyes in *Hypocrisie*, and invent lyes that should have a pretence of holines; which they knew to be a lye, or else they should not be said to speak lyes in *Hypocrisie*; but they doe it to maintaine their honour & greatnesse, which must downe, if their doctrine prove false; and though many are given up to beleewe their lyes, *2 Thes. 2. 11.* as a punishment of their not *loving the truth*; yet others of them shall know they are lies, and yet vent them for truths. Thus when men fashion their opinion to the times & wayes of preferment, and their dependances on Great ones, or to maintain & uphold a factiō, or out of pride, having broached an error, maintaine it, though the pulling out that one tile doth untile all the house. These are the 2 causes give of perverting the truth, *1 Tim. 6. 4. 5.* namely *pride & covetousnesse*, and supposing *gain* godlines, and

and so fashioning their religion accordingly; when men are *Knights* of the post, that will write or speake any thing, vvh whereby they may get gaine and prelerment.

Secondly, men sins against knowvledge in regard of others.

First, by concealing it: the Apostle indeed sayes in a certaine case, *Hast thou knowvledge, keepe it to thy selfe*. He speakes it of opinions, or practices about things indifferent, vvhich might scandalize the vveake; but if thou hast knowvledge, vvhich may edifie thy brother, thou oughtest to communicate it. *Socrates*, knowing there vvas but one God, said, in his Apologie for his life, that if they vwould give him life, upon condition to keep that truth to himselfe, and not to teach it to others, hee vwould not accept life upon such a condition; and I remember he expresseth his resolution in vvords vvery nigh the same vvords the *Apostles* used; *Acts 4. 20. Whether it be better to obey God than men, judge you; and vve cannot but teach the things we have heard and seene*, sayes Christ; for knowvledge is a thing vwill boyle vvithin a man ior vent, and cannot be imprisoned; It is light, and the end vvhy light vvas made, vvas to be set up to give light. And Christ argues from an apparent absurdity to put a light under a bushell, vvhich may give light to all the House; *Hast thou knowvledge of God & of his vvayes*, thou canst not but speake (if vvithall thou hast but a good heart) to all in the family, to thy vvife in thy bosome, &c. God took it for granted, that *Abraham* vwould teach his Children vvhat he should knowv from him; The same disposition is in all the *Children of Abraham*.

Secondly ; vvhhen men endeavour to suppress knowledge. As the *Pharisees*, they kept the *Keyes* of it in their hands, and vvould not open the treasures of it themselves, nor let others doe it neither. So they (*Acts 4. 16.*) could not deny but a great miracle vvvas done by the *Apottles* (say themselves) but that it spread no further, let us threaten them, and charge them, that they speake no more in his name. And this they did against their cōsciences by their owne profession, we cannot deny it ; As if they had said, if we could we would, but it was too manifest it was the truth. So when Masters keep their servants from the meanes of knowledge, they are thus guilty.

Thirdly , when wee would make others sinne against their consciences. The *Pharisees*, when the blind man would not say as they said, they cast him out; they would have had him say, that *Christ vvvas a sinner*, when through the small light he had, hee judged it evident enough, that a sinner should not doe such a miracle, as was never done since the world began. And so *Iezabel* made the Iudges, and witnesses sinne against conscience in accusing *Naboth*; and so some of the Gentiles, that would hold correspondencie with the Iewes, would have constrained the *Galatians* to be circumcised, *Gal. 6. 12.* Those that knew that circumcision was to be abolished, yet they would perswade them to it by a clubb argument, drawn from avoiding persecution, not from evidence of the Truth, or by reasons that might convince them, and their consciences; therefore he sayes, they constrained them. The perswaders might indeed glory, as having their cause & side strengthened ; but they wanne little credit

credit to their cause by it ; for as the perswaders arguments were suited to flesh, so the others yeelding was out of flesh, and *so they glory in your flesh* and weaknesse, sayes he; as the Papists urged *Cranmer*, not by arguments, but threats and promises to recant; This is the greatest cruelty in the world, to have a man murder himself, *Itab* his conscience. To offend a weake conscience is a sinne, if but passively, when thou dost something before his face, which his conscience is against : but if thou makest him wound his own conscience, and to doe an act himselfe, which his owne conscience is against, it is much worse, as if thou beest a Master, and halt a servant who pleadeth *conscience*, that he cannot lye for thy advantage in thy shop, or who will not doe unlawfull businesses on the *Sabbath-day*, and pleads conscience, wilt thou smite him and whip him? *God will smite thee, thou whited wall*. How darest thou smite him, and so cause him to doe that for vvhich God will vvhip him vvorse? Shevv mercy to those under you, enforce their consciences, vvring them not, you may hap to breake the vvards if you doe.

Novv for sinnes committed *collaterally*, or *per modum circumstantiae* (that I may so expresse it) against knowledge, they are done either when particular acts of sinne are committed, and duties omitted, against light and knowledge; and so the Saints may and doe often sinne against knowledge. Or,

Secondly, in regard of a knowne estate of sinne, and impenitencie persisted in; when men continue, and goe on in such a state against conviction of conscience, that such is their estates.

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For the first, because particular acts of sin committed against knowledge are infinite, and there will be no end of instancing in particulars, therefore I will not insist: Onely in brieife this distinction concerning such acts may be observed, and the observation of it may be usefull: That some acts of *sinnes against knowledge*, are meerely *transient*: That is, are done and ended at once. And though the guilt of them is eternall, yet the extent of the act is finished with the committing it, & reacheth no further, as a vaine oath, breach of the Sabbath, &c. which acts cannot be repealed, though they may be repented of. But others there are, which though the act may bee but once outwardly and professedly done, yet have an habituall and continued permanency, life, & subsistence given it, such as that untill a man doth recall them, he may be said continually to renew those acts, and every day to be guilty of them, and to maintaine it, & so habitually to commit them. As it is with Laws, which though made but once, are yet continued acts of the state, whilest they stand in force unrepealed; so is it in some sins. For instance, when a man doth take goods from his neighbour unjustly, the act indeed is done but once; but till he restores them, he may be said to steale them; every day, every houre he continues to doe it habitually; So a man having subscribed to falshood, or recanted the truth publicly; the act, though done but once, yet untill a retractation be some wayes made, he continues that act, and so is daily a new guilty of it. So if a man should marry one, whom it is unlawfull for him to marry, (as Herod did,) though that sinfull act of espousals, whereby they entred into it,

was soon dispatched; yet till a divorce, he lives in a continuall sin. And such acts (of this latter sort I meane) against knowledge, are most dangerous to commit; because to continue thus in them, though but once committed, hazards a mans estate, and therefore men finde, when they come to repent, the greatest snare, and trouble; and difficulty in such kind of sins; to extricate themselves out of them by a meet & true repentance.

But as concerning the first branch of this distinction, namely, of particular acts committed against knowledge; besides this last distinction briefly touched; I will anon give you severall aggravations & rules, whereby to measure the sinfulness that is in such acts so committed, but in the meane time, the second branch of this former distinction must be insisted upon, and therefore I will bring in these aggravations and rules which concerne particular acts. as distinct heads, after I have briefly spoken to this other, which is, That

Secondly, those sinnes against knowledge, who goe on in an estate of sin and impenitencie, which they know to be damnable; As *Pharaoh*, *Exod. 9. 27.* who confest that he and his people were wicked, and yet hardened himselfe in sinne most dangerously; and yet three sorts of men may apparently be convinced thus to sin.

First, those that keep out, and with-draw themselves from professing Christ and his wayes, and the feare of his name, out of shame or feare of man, or losse of preferment, or the like worldly ends when yet they are convinced that they are Gods wayes, and ought to be professed by them. I doe not say, that all, who doe not come in to profess

Christ

Christ, and that doe not joyne themselves with his people, that they goe on against knowledge ; for many are ignorant, and mistaken about them; but when men are convinced of the truth, & necessity of professing and *confessing* of it even unto *salvation*. (as the Apostle speakes, *Rom. 10.*) and yet out of feare, or shame, keepe still on the other side, drawing in their hornes all together. These goe on in an estate of impenitencie against knowledg; for put all these together , and it must needs appeare to be so : As first, when they are convinced that this is the truth, & that salvation & the power of religion is onely to be found in such wayes and men; And secondly, that these are to be practised & professed ; And yet thirdly, out of shame, &c. keepe still a loofe off , and goe on a contrary way; These must needs know, that they goe on in an estate of impenitencie against knowledge. This was the case of many of the *Pharisees*, who therefore sinned highly ; they beleaved, and were convinced, that Christ was the Messiah; and so then to be confest, and followed , and to be cleaved unto; and then also they must needs know, that his followers only were the Children of God. Yet *Ioh. 12. 42.* it is said, *though they thus beleaved on him*, yet they *durst not confesse him for feare of the Iews, & of the Pharises, and of being put out of the Synagogues.* At the latter day , Christ shall not need to sever such from the rest, as he wil doe the sheep from the goats ; for they willingly remaine all their dayes amongst them, whom they know to be goats, and refuse the company ; and fould , and food , and marks of the sheep, which they know to be such; they may apologize, & make fair with the Saints

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that their hearts are with them, but they will bee rankt at the day of Judgement, as here they ranked themselves, *with the workers of iniquity.* Of these doth the Psalmist speake: *These that turne aside by their crooked wayes, them shall the Lord leade with the workers of iniquity.* Psal. 125.

Those also thus sinne, and are to be joyned with these, who know the terms and conditions of salvation, and how they must part with all for Christ, and yet will not come to the price; Such doe goe desperately on against knowledge in a bad estate, and doe judge themselves unworthy of eternall life. Thus the young man in the Gospell, he was told, that he was to sell all, and that was the condition, and hee knew Heaven was worth it, and was convinced of the truth herein, that thus he ought to doe, *for he went away sorrowfull*; Now, if he had not known that he went away without happinesse, he needed not have beene sorrowfull at all; but he knew the bargain of salvatiō was not struck up, and likewise what it stuck at, and yet still rested in his former condition, and chose rather to enjoy his many possessions; This man now went on in his state against knowledge.

Secondly, as also those who upon the same or like ground defer their repentance, these go on in a bad estate, and must needs know they doe so; for in that they promise to repent hereafter, and take up purposes to doe it, when they have gone on a little while longer, to adde drunkenesse to thirst, they doe thereby professe that there is a worke of grace, which they must attaine to, ere they can be in the state of grace: for they would not promise so much hereafter, but that they know not how, with-

out such a worke, they should be saved. Whilest therefore such shall rest without present endeavouring after it, so long they are judged in themselves to be in a bad estate at present. When men know the curses due to their present estate, & yet say as he, *Deut. 29 19. I will go on in the way of my heart, & shall have peace afterward.* This man sins most highly, and therefore Gods wrath *smoakes against that man*, and he sayes of him that *he will not bee mercifull to him*, in that place.

Thirdly, unke and broken professors such cannot but goe on in a bad estate against knowledge; when either men are fallen from the practice and profession of what is good, which once they thought necessary to salvation; or when they continue to hold forth their profession in *Hypocrisie*. *Those that have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of Iesus Christ*, but are returned to their vomit againe, some of these are ingenious, and acknowledge both themselves fallen, & their present estate most miserable, & yet go on in it; and such are to be pittied, but yet are in a most dangerous condition. *Saul* when he was fallē away, yet had this ingenuity a while left, he desired *Samuel* to pray to his God for him, and told *David*, that he was more righteous then he; yet still went on in his courses; and in the end (as some have thought) sinned against the *Holy Ghost*.

But others there are, who though they be fallen from all the inward, powerfull and secret performance of duties they once did practice, and from all conscience of sinning, yet retain their profession which they know to be but an out-side; these of all others goe on against knowledge; and *Rev. 22. 15.*

they are said to make a lye; not onely to tell a lye in words, but to make a lye in deeds. Now, a lye is a sin of all others most against knowledge, and indeed against a double knowledge, both *facti* and *juri*: & so in this. 1. That they professe themselves to be that they know they are not. 2. That they will not endeavour after that state they know they ought to get into, if ever saved. This is the condition of many, who being convinced of the power of Religiō, have launched forth into a profession, and hoyft up saile, but now the tyde is fallen, the spirit withdrawne, the conscience of sinne extinguishd in them; yet for their credit sake still beare their sailes up as high as ever; even as many Merchants doe, who are sunk in their estates, still beare a faire shew; yea will seeme richer then ordinary, by purchasing lands, &c. Such a professor was *Iudas* he began seriously, and thought to haue gone to Heaven, and was earnest in good duties at first; As they also, 2 Pet. 2. 18. they really, or *veritas*, escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of Christ; but in the end *Iudas* became a grosse Hypocrite, one that pretended the poore, when he loved the bag; & on the sudden betrayed his Master, when yet the Disciples knew it not, suspected *Iudas* as little as themselves; and the end of those also, in that fore-named place, is said to be worse then their beginning. Now because such sin so highly against knowledge, therefore their punishment is made the regula of all other wicked mens; As vvhien it is said, that other sinners shall have their portion with Hypocrites: as the wicked Angels punishment is made the measure of mens; Goe ye cursed into the fire prepared for the Devill and

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and his Angels: So among men, such grosse Hypocrites, their punishment is made the rule, and so the chiefe of all kind of torments, which sinners of the sonnes of men shall undergoe.

Now let mee speake a word to all such as thus go on in a state of impenitencie against knowledg: This is a high kinde of sinning, and of all the most desperate, & doth argue more hardnesse of heart, and despising the riches of Gods goodnesse. For if, as in the *Rom 2. 4.* to go on in sinne, when a man [*knowes not*] hat is, considers not that Gods mercy leads him to repentance, is made the signe and effect of a very hard heart, treasuring up wrath, then much more, when thou knowest & considerest thou art in an impenitent condition, and hast many motions leading thee to repentance, is thy heart then to be accounted hard? When a man commits a particular act against knowledg, he haply & usually still thinks his estate may be good, and that he shall not lose God utterly, or hazard the losse of him; onely his spirit, being at present empty of communion with him, he steales out to some stolne pleasure; but when a man knowes his estate bad, & that he is *without God in the World*, and yet goes on, hee doth hereby cast away the Lord, and professeth he cares not for him, or that communion which is to be had by him, as *Esau* did his birth-right.

David, though he despised the Lord, yet he did not cast away the Lord as *Saul* did; for *Saul* ventured utterly to lose him, knowing his estate naught. *David*, when he sinned, thought Gods eternall favour would still continue, though for the present he might loose the sense of it. But when a

man goes on in a state of sinning, he ventures the losse of Gods eternall love, and flights it, & knowes he doth so; when a man knowes that he is *condemned already*, as being impenitent, and that all his eternall estate lyes upon the non-payment of such duties of repentance, &c. and that the guilt of all his finnes will come in upon him, and that an execution is out, and yet goes on, this is more then to commit one act against knowledge, whereby he thinkes hee brings upon himself but the guilt of that one sinne; and upon the committing of which, he thinks not the morgage of all lyes, though it deserves it; Herein men shew themselves more desperate.

In the next place, I come to those rules, wherby you may measure and estimate sinning against knowledge, in any particular act of sinning; and they are either *before the sinne*, or *in sinning*: three of either, which I make a second head, to explaine this doctrine by.

First, before.

The first rule is, The more thou knewest, and didst consider the issues and consequents of that sinne thou didst commit; the more thou sinnest against conscience in it: whē as in *Rom. i. ult.* Thou knowest (sayes the Apostle) that those that commit such things, are worthy of death: That is, thou considerest that Hell and Damnation is the issue & desert of it, and yet committest it; yea and this when haply hell fire at present flasheth in thy face; and yet thou goest on to do it, in this case men are said to choose death, & to love it; *Prov. 3. 36.* When a man considers, that the way to the whorehouse are the wayes to death (as Salomon speakes.) So when thou

thou a professor considerest with thy selfe before, This sinne will prove scandalous, & undoe me, disable me for service, cast me out of the hearts of good men, and yet dost it. Thus that foolish King was told againe & againe. *Ier. 38. 17. 18. 19.* that if he would yeeld to the *King of Babel*, he should save his life; and City; and Kingdome, and live there still; but if he would not, he should not escape: but as *Ieremie* told him, *verse 23.* *Thou shalt cause this City to be burnt with fire*, yet hee would not hearkē; *This is the word of the Lord* (sayes *Ieremie*,) and he knew it to be so; and yet being a weake Prince, led by his Nobles, he would not follow his Counsell; and thus *Iudas* fully knew the issue; *Christ* had laid againe and againe, *Woe be to him by whom the Sonne of man is betrayed*, and yet went on to doe it.

The second rule is, the more consultations, debates, and motives against it, did runne through thee before thou didst it, so much the greater and more hainous. How often did mercy come in, and tell thee, that if thou lookest for any hope or part in it, thou shouldest not doe such an evill? How often came that in. *Shall I doe this, and sinne against God?* did any Scripture come in to testifie against thee in the nick? Did God send in the remembrance of such a mercie past, to perswade thee; or some mercies to come, which thou dependest upon him for? That which made *Spira's* sinne so grear, was such debates as these before: And this made *Darius* sinne, in casting *Daniel* into the Lions den, so great; He debated it with himselfe, *Dan. 6. 14.* He was sore displeased with himselfe, & laboured to the going downe of the sunne to deliuer him;

He considered that hee was as his right hand in all the affaires of his Kingdome , and a man entrapped meerely for his conscience , and that to put him to deatn was to sacrifice him to their malice; he knew him to be holy, & wise, worth all the men that sought after his life , and yet yeelded; These considerations troubled him afore, and also after ; insomuch as he could not sleepe for them; *ver. 18.* Now because that every such consultation should set an impression upon the heart, and countermand the motions of sin, when therefore thou doest it, maugre all such debates & motives to the contrary, this is much against knowledge, and very heynous. Therefore the *Pharises, Luke 7. 30.* are said to have rejected the counsell of God , *is iuris, in* or against themselves; The words will beare either; *In themselves* , because they knew it, and tooke it into consideration , and yet rejected it : And *against themselves* , because it was their destruction.

The third rule is , that the more confirmations any man hath had of the knowledge of that which he sinneth in , and testimonies against it, the greater sinne against knowledge it is; when a man hath had a cloud of witnesses in his obervation against a particular sinne ; and yet doth it, and goes on in it, it is the more fearfull. To goe on against that one witnesse , the bare light and grudging of naturall conscience only, is not so much ; But when it is further confirmed , and backed by the Word written, which a man hath read, and with testimonies , out of which a man meets with such places wherein againe and againe, in reading of it, such a practice is condemned, and observes it; and then
also

also heares it reprov'd in Sermons, and of all sinns else, heares in private conference that sin spoken against also; yea hath in his eye many examples of others sinning in the like kinde, which have beene punished, yea haply himselfe also; yet to sin against all these is exceeding hainous. Sometimes God orders things so, as a sinne is made a great sinne, by such forewarnings; So he contrived circumstances that *Iudas* sinned a great sinne; for *Iudas* knew before that Christ was the Saviour of the World, He knew it by all the miracles he had seene; as also by his gracious words & converse; & he protested as much in following of him; and he had the written word against it, *Thou shalt not murder the innocent*. But yet further, God to aggravate his sinne to the highest, orders it so, that Christ should tell him of it when he was to goe about it, pronounceth a woe to him, *Iohn 12. 22.* that *it had beene good for that man that he had never beene borne*. *Mar. 14. 21.* and the Disciples they were sorrowfull at Christs speech, when he suspected one of them; & shewed an abomination and detestation of such a fact, there was a Iurie of eleven men, yea witnesses against it; yea and *Iudas* against himselfe, he asked *if it were he*; yea and Christ gave him a sop, and told him, *thou hast said it, and doe what thou doest quickly*: which even then might argue to his conscience, that he was God, and searched and knew his heart, and yet he went out, and did it immediately. How did he sinne against the haire, as wee speake, and how did all these circumstances aggravate his sinne?

But yet a more cleare evidence of this is that instance of *Pilate*, whom God many wayes would have

have stopt in his sinne of condemning Christ, who examining him before the *Pharises*, he could finde no fault with him, as concerning those things whereof they accused him, *Luke 23 14.* and yet to allay their malice, unjustly scourged him, *verse 16.* And further, when he sent him to *Herod*, as being willing to rid his owne hands of him, *Herod* also found nothing worthy of death in him, *verse 15.* which was another witnesse might have confirmed him concerning Christs innocencie. Yea yet further, that the fact might be more aggravated, a most notorious murtherers life must be put into the scale with Christs, and either the one or the other condemned: and when the people yet chose *Barabas*, vvhy (sayes *Pilate*) what evill hath he done? *ver. 22.* then he distinctly knew & considered, that he was delivered up through envie; Yea & when he was upō the bench, & ready to pronounce sentence, as it were, God admonisht him by his owne vvife, *Mat. 27. 19.* whom God himselfe had admonished in a dreame, she sending him word she had suffered many things by reason of him that night, and therefore have nothing (sayes shee) to doe vvith that just man: yea hee himselfe when he condemnes him, washeth his hands. And thus it falls out in many sinfull busineses, which men are about, that God often and many severall wayes would knock them off, and stops them in their way, as hee did *Balaam*; reproves them, as he did him by a duwbe Ass, *2 Pet. 2. 16.* so there by some silent passage of providence, and not onely so, but by his Spirit also standing in their way, with the threatnings ready drawne and brandisht against them, as the Angell did with a drawne sword against *Balaam*, and yet

yet they goe on ; This is fearfull.

There are 3 Rules also, whereby the sinfulness of sin, as it is against knowledge, may be measured, from what may be observed I N the act : as

First, the lesse passion, or inward violence or temptation to a sinne committed against knowledge, the greater sinne against knowledge it is argued to be; For then the knowledge is the clearer passion or temptation being as a mist. But then to sin, when a man is not in passion, is to stumble at noon-day. For as drunkenness takes away reason, so doth passion (which is a short drunkenness) cloud & mist a mans knowledge. And so *Aristotle* compares the knowledge of an incontinent person to the knowledge of one that is drunk. When *Peter* denied his Master, though he had warning of it before, and so it was against knowledge, and it was by lying, & swearing, and forswearing, which are sinnes of all other most directly against knowledge, yet he was taken unexpectedly; and when that which might stirre up feare to the utmost in him, was in his view; for he vvas then in the Iudgment Hall, vvhich his Master, just before his face, was arraigned for his life; and he thought he might also have presently been brought to the barre vvith him, if he had beene discovered to have beene his Disciple; so as his passion being up, his soule vvas distempered, reason had little time to recover itselfe; And therefore though it vvas against knowledge, yet the lesse against knowledge, because knowledge had *lasam operationem*, it had not its perfect vwork upon his heart; but novv *Iudas*, in betraying his Master, had not onely vvarning before, but vvas not tempted to it, but vvvent of *himselſe*
and

and made the offer to the *Pharisees*, sought how conveniently to doe it, plotted to doe it, had his wits about him, had time to thinke of it, and therefore it was (besides the hainousnesse of the act) more also against knowledge, and so the greater. So *David* when hee went to slay *Nabal*, was in hot blood, in a passion; but when he plotted to kill *Vriah*, he was in cold blood; He was drunke when he lay with *Bathsheba*, but sober when he made *Vriah* drunke; He went quietly and sedately on in it. And therefore we finde *David* blamed only in the matter of *Vriah*, not so much for that of *Bathsheba*.

Secondly, the more sorrow, *renisus*, or reluctancie, and regretting of mind there is against a sin, 't is a signe, that the knowledg of it is the stronger, and quicker against it, and so the sinne the more against knowledge; for that gaine-saying and displeasure of the mind against it, ariseth from the strength and violent beating of the pulse of conscience, and opposition of it against the sinne, it springs from the greater & deeper apprehension of the evill of the sinne in the action, which is then in doing; and though that reluctancie be a better signe of the estate of the person, then if there were none at all; as there is not in those vvhho are past feeling, & commit sin with greedinesse; whose estate is therefore worse, and more uncapable of repentance, yet the fact it self is argued to be the more hainous, for it argues it to be against strong, active, stirring knowledge. This argued *Herods* sinne to be much against knowledge (as indeed it was) *Mark. 6.26.* the Text sayes: *He vvas exceeding sorrowful:* Now that he could not have beene, unless he had

exceedingly apprehended vvhhat a great sinne it was to behead *Iohn*, who, *He knew, was a just and an holy man*, ver. 20. and who was one that had a great place in his estimation, *for he observed him*, and was wrought much upon by his ministerie, and he knew that hee did but sacrifice him to the malice of a wicked woman, and in this case the sinne is also hereby made so much the greater, in that *Conscience* doth stir up a contrary violent passion in the heart against the temptation, and therefore yet to doe it, when there is such a bank cast up that might resist it, yet then to breake all downe, such a sin waists the conscience much.

Thirdly, on the contrary the more hardnesse of heart there is, and want of tendernesse, in committing that sinne, which a man knowes to be a sinne, it is argued thereby to be the greater sinne against knowledge, Not onely the greater sinne, but the greater sinne against knowledge. For hardnesse of heart in sinning, is an effect of having formerly sinned much against knowledge before. For as the light of the Sunne hardneth clay, so the beames of knowledge and conscience, lightning upon mens hearts, use to harden them, and doe make them in the end *past feeling*. And therefore in *1 Tim. 4. 2.* sinning against knowledge is made the cause of a seared conscience, *they speake lyes in Hypocrisie*: & therefore knowingly that they are lyes, and such lyes as damne others as well as themselves, which who beleeve are damned, *2 Thes. 2. 11. 12.* And if so, no wonder if it followes, having their Consciences seared with an *hot iron*. It is not a *cold iron* will seare their consciences, and make them insensible, but an *hot iron*, a burning and a shining light,

light, which once having had place in their consciences, and being rejected, they begin to be hardened and seared. For knowledge makes sinnes & the apprehensions of them, familiar to a man, and so lesse terrible and frightfull in the end, as Beares and Lyons doe become to their keepers, through custome. *Iudas* had a hard heart, when he came to betray his Master, surely his conscience had smitten him at first more, for nimning out of the bag, then it did now for this of murder. He could never have had such a hard heart, had he not had much knowledge; Was it not a hard heart, that when he was challenged to his face, he could set a brazen face on it, and did alke as well as the rest, *Is it not?* When also Christ cursed him to his face, who should doe it, and the Disciples all abhorred it: Had not *Iudas* lived under such blessed and glorious meanes, and sinned long against knowledg, all this would have startled him, & have staggered him in his purpose; but hee goes on as if it were nothing, though vvhhen he had done it, his conscience vvvas then opened too late; vvhen a man formerly hath beene troubled vvith a small sinne, more then novv vvith a grosse lye, vvich he can digest better then once the other; Or, vvhen before, if he omitted praying, it troubled him, novv he can goe a Weeke vvithout, and is not sensible of it, it is a signe that his knowvledge hath hardened him.

Thus having given such rules, vvhereby you may estimate the sinfulness of particular acts, I vvill novv proceed to other vvayes, aggravations taken from the kind of knowvledge a man sins against, to sin against vvhat kind of knowledg is most hainous & dangerous; And these are five, dravvne from the
seve-

severall qualifications of that knowledge, and the light which men sinne against. For the greater, or the more strong & efficacious the light and knowledge is, the greater is the sinne of knowledge thou committest, and this I make a *third* generall head to explaine this doctrine by. All these five Rules being applicable and common both to particular acts against knowledge, and also lying in an estate of impenitencie against knowledge, and all other particulars which have beene mentioned.

First then, to sin against the inbred light of nature, that is, in such sinnes, as though thou hadst wanted the light of the word in, thou wouldst have knowne to be such: This is a high kind of sinning. Such the Apostle speakes of, *Iude 10. What things they know naturally, in these they corrupt themselves as brut beasts*, putting as it were no difference of actions, no more then beasts, no not in what nature teacheth them, and therefore therein are as beasts: For it is the light of nature puts the first difference betweene men and beasts; and in such kinde of sinnes the Apostle instanceth in this first Chapter, as namely, that of *unnaturall uncleannesse*, in three particulars: as 1. *self-uncleannesse*, ver. 24 *ὁ ἑαυτοῦ*; that is, alone by themselves; So Beza & Theophylact understād it, which he makes there the first degree of unnaturall uncleannesse, which is therefore unnatural, because thou destroyest that which nature gave thee for propagation, *quod perdis homo est*. Then 2. the uncleane love of boyes, *men burning in lust with men*, ver. 27. be it discovered in what dalliance it will, though not arising to an act of Sodomie, *doing that which is unseemly*; ver. 27. which he therefore sayes, is the *perverting the use*

and intent of nature, and so is a sin against nature, leaving the naturall use of Women. My brethren, I am ashamed to speak of such things as are done in secret. These kind of sinnes, by the Apostles ranking them, are in a further degree of unnaturalnes, then any other, because they are made the punishments of other sinns, which yet were against the light of nature also; namely, not glorifying God, when they knew him: yet that being a sinne, the light of nature was not so clear in compariton of these, therefore these are made the punishments of the other, as being more against nature. So for men to bee disobedient to Parents, stubborn to them, and without naturall affection, as the Apostle sayes, ver. 30. 31. this is against nature, even the instinct of it. So unthankfulnesse, & requiting evill for good, is against a common principle in mens minds. Doe not the Gentiles doe good to those that doe good to them? your hearts use to rise against such an one out of common humanity; or if you see one cruell & unmercifull, which is another reckoned up, ver. 21. there being usually principles of pitty in all mens natures, by nature; Therefore for one man to prey upon, and tyrannize over another, as fishes doe over the smal ones, as Habakkuk complaineth, this is against nature; which teacheth you to doe as you would be done to. So Covenant-breakers, & lying and forswearing, mentioned ver. 30. inventers of evill, & truce-breakers, are sins against nature, and naturall light; Lying is against a double light, both morall; both *juris*, which tels us such a thing ought not to be done; And *facti*, whilest we affirm a thing that is not, the knowledge of the contrary ariseth up in us against it, though there were no law forbade

bade it; Therefore of all sins else, the Devils lusts are expressed by two; *Lying*, which is a sinne in the understanding, and *malice* in the will, *Iohn* 8.44.

Secondly, to sinne against that light which thou didst suck in, when thou wert young, to sin against the *light of thy education*, this is an aggravation, & a great one. There is a Catechisme of a blessed mother *Bathsheba*, which she taught *Solomon* whē a child, put in among the records of sacred Writ, *Prov.* 31. wherein she counsels him betimes, *not to give his strength to Women*; she foretold him of that sinne; & because it is incident to Kings most; they having all pleasures at command, she tels him particularly, *it destroyes Kings*: and so also *not to drink Wine*, was another instruction there hee was forewarned of; this aggravated *Solomons* fault the more; for reade the 2. Chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, and we shall finde there, that he was most guilty in the inordinate love of these two; but he had not been brought up so, his good mother had not thus instructed him. And thus also when God would aggravate his owne peoples sin unto them, he recalls them to their education in their youth in the Wilderness. So *Ierem.* 2.2. *Goe and cry to them, I remember the kindnesse & towardlinesse of thy youth*: he puts them in mind of their education by *Moses* their Tutor, and their forwardnesse then. And so *Hos.* 12. *When he was a child, I loved him*; And then God had *their first fruits*, ver. 3. this he brings to aggravate their back-sliding, ver. 5. Therefore the Apostle urgeth it as a strong argument to *Timothy*, to goe on to persevere in grace & goodnesse. *that he had knowne the Scriptures from a Child*:

And therefore for him to fall, would be more hainous. The reason is, because light then infused, it is the first, a *virgin* light, as I may call it, which God in much mercy vouchsafed to pre-possesse the minde with, before it should be deflowred and defiled with corrupt principles from the world; & did put it there to keep the mind chaste & pure; and this is also then, when the minde was most soft and tender, and so fitter to receive the deeper impression from it. And hence ordinarily the light suckt in then, seasons men ever after, whether it be for good, or for evill; It fore-tells, and pre-judgerh a man against other principles; And though a man comes to have more acquired knowledge & reasons after put into him when he is come to perfect age, yet the small light of his education, if it were to the contrary, doth bias him, and keeps him fixt, and bent that way. So we see it is in opinions about Religion; the light then entertained, can never bee disputed-out; So in mens wayes & actions, *Traine up a child in his way, and he will not depart from it. Prov. 22. 6.* To sin therefore against it, and to put out the beames of it, or defile it, and to weare out the impressions of it, how wicked is it, and what a wretch art thou to doe so?

Many of you young schollers have had a good *Bathsheba* that instructeth you, not to poure out your strength to drinke or women, but to pray privately, and to feare God, & love him; and when you come hither, you have good *Tutors* also, who teach you to pray; Ministers, who intill blessed truths into you, from which, one would think, you should never depart; yet you doe.

Thinke

Thinke how grievous this is ; for if it is made an excuse for many a man in sinning , that it answers but his education ; that he never knew or saw better , as you say of many Papists ; then must it needs on the contrary , be an aggravation of sinfulness. And as it was *Timothies* commendation , that *hee knew the Scriptures from a Child* , so it will be thy condemnation , that thou knewest better from a child , and yet rebellest against thy light.

Thirdly , the more *reall & experimental* the light is , men sinne against , still the more sinne ; As when they have learnt it from examples of godly men , whom they have lived amongst , or the observations of Gods dealings vvith themselves or others , and not onely from the word notionally . To sinne against such light , this addes a further degree ; not onely to sinne against the bare light of nature , but also further , when nature hath besides lighted her torch at the *Scripture* , and then when beyond all this , the reall examples and observations made of Gods dealings with a mans selfe and others , shall confirme all this , this makes a mans sinfulness much more grievous ; for as *exempla efficacius docent quam precepta* , so the knowledge got by experiments of mercies or judgements , is of more force and evidence . Knowledge learnt by experience , is the most efficacious . Therefore Christ himselfe , who knew all things already , yet learnt (in the schoole of experience) by what hee suffered . A little of some knowledge distill'd out of a mans owne observation , is most precious , every drop of it ; Therefore the Apostle urgeth it on *Timothie* , 2 *Tim. 3. 14.* Continue in the things thou hast learned , & beene assured of , knowing of whom thou

thou hast learned them. There is a two-fold motive, and both emphaticall; First, he was *assured* in himselfe; and secondly, that which strengthened that assurance, and was a meanes to worke it, was the example of the holy Apostle, and of his owne Parents, Knowing of whom thou hast learned it: And so *ver. 10.* the Apostle againe urgeth his owne example: Thou hast fully knowne my doctrine & manner of life; and then also brings to his mind the education of those his godly Parents, who instructed him. Hence also, *Esay 26. 10.* it is made an aggravation, that *in the land of uprightnesse men deale unjustly.* Thus light drawn from the observation of Gods judgements upon others, it much aggravates; it is laid to *Belshazzars* charge, *Dan. 5. 22.* Thou knewest all this, how God dealt with thy father *Nebuchadonoxer*. So some of you come here, and live in a religious society, and see sometimes one, sometimes another of thy Colleagues turn to Christ, yea haply chamber fellow converted from his evil courtes, and yet thou goest on, this is a sinning against a great light.

Fourthly, the more vigorous, strong, powerfull the light is that is in thee, and more *stirring* in thy heart, & joyned with a taste, the greater the finnes committed against it are to be accounted. The more thou hast tasted the bitterness of sinne, and Gods wrath, and hast beene stung with it as vvith a *Cockatrice*, the more thou hast tasted Gods goodness in prayer, & in the ordinances, the more of such a knowledge, and yet sinnest the worse. In the *5. of Iohn 35.* Christ aggravates the *Iewes* unbeleef in himselfe, and their present hardness, that Iohn was to them, not only a shining, but also a burning light;

light, that is, they had such knowledge engendred by his ministry, as wrought joy & heat, as well as light; therefore it is added, they rejoyced therein for a season. And thus their fall, *Heb. 6.* is aggravated, that it was such a light as had tasting with it. For to expaine this, you must know, that between ordinary notionall light, or that assenting to spirituall truth, which is common with men, from traditionall knowledge living in the Church, that between it & true saving light, or the light of life, there is a middle kind of light, which is more then the common conviction men have, and lesse then saving light; it is a light which leavs also some impression on the affections, makes them feeble the powers of Heaven & Hell, & be affected with them. Now the more of such light against a sinne, be it drunkennesse, or uncleannesse, or oppression, & yet fallest to it againe, the worse. For this is a further degree added to knowledge, & not common to all wicked men. And therefore as those *Jewes*, vvhich had not only common meanes of knowlege, but miracles also, and yet beleevd not, *Iohn 12. 17.* shall be more condemned; so those who have such tasting knowledg let on by the Holy Ghost (which is as much as if a miracle were wrought, for it is above nature, a *supernaturall* worke of the Spirit.) And therefore to sinne against such light, and such onely, is that vvhich makes a man in the next degree of fitnessse to sinne against the Holy Ghost.

Fifthly; to sin against professed knowledge, is an aggravation also, and an heavy one. To sin against a mans owne principles which he teacheth others, or reproves or censureth in others, *Titus 1. last.*

Those that professe they know God, and yet deny him, these are most *abominable* of all others; For these are lyars, and so sinne against knowledge as lyars doe, in the *1 John 2.4.* such an one is called a *liar* in a double respect; both in that he sayes he hath that knowledge he hath not, it not being true; and because also he denyes that indeed, which he affirms in word, this is scandalous sinning. So *Rom. 2.24.* the *Iewes* boasting of *th law*, and of *having the forme of knowledg* in their braines, caused the *Gentiles* to *blaspheme*, when they saw they lived cleane contrary thereunto; And therefore a brother that walkes inordinately, was to be delivered to *Satan*, to *learne what it was to blaspheme*, *1 Tim. 2.20.* That is, to learn to know how evil & bitter a thing it is, by the torments of an evill conscience, to live in such a course, as made God & his wayes evill spoken of, as it befel *David* when he thus sinned. Yea *2 Cor. 5. 10. 11.* though they might keep company with a *Heathen*, because he was ignorant, and professed not the knowledge of God, yet if a brother, one that professed; and so was to walke by the same rules did sinne against those principles he professed, then *keep him not company*; Thus did *Saul* sinne. All the Religion he had & pretended to in his latter dayes, was *persecuting witches*; yet in the end he went against this his principles; hee went to a witch in his great extremity at last. And thus God will deale with all that are hollow, and sinne secretly against knowledge in the end. Hee suffers them to goe against their most professed principles.

These are aggravations in generall, applicable both to any act of sinning, or going on in a known state of sinning.

Vse.

Use. Now the use of all that hath been spoken, what is it, but to move all those that have knowledge, to take heed, more heed of sinning then other men? And those of them that remaine in their naturall estate, to turne speedily & effectually unto God? For if sinning against knowledge be so great an aggravation of sinning, then of all engagements to repentance, knowledge is the greatest.

First, thou who hast knowledge, canst not sin so cheap as another, who is ignorant. Therefore if thou wilt be wicked, thy wickednesse will cost thee ten times more then it would another. Places of much knowledge, and plentiful in the meanes of grace, are deare places to live in sin in. To be drunk & uncleane, after enlightning, and the motions of the Spirit, and powerfull Sermons, is more then twenty times afore; thou mightest have committed ten to one, and beeing damned lesse. This is condemnation (*sayes Christ*) *that light came into the World.* Neither canst thou have so much pleasure in thy sin as an ignorant person; For the conscience puts forth a sting in the act, when thou hast knowledge, and does subject thee to bondage and the fear of death. When a man knowes how dearly he must pay for it, there is an expectation of judgement embittereth all. Therefore the *Gentiles* sinned with more pleasure then we. Therefore *Eph. 4. 18. 19.* the *Apostle* speaking of them, sayes, that through *their ignorance*, and darknesse, and want of feeling, they committed sin *with greedinesse*, & so with more pleasure; they not having knowledge or hearts sensible of the evils that attend upon their courses.

Secondly, thou wilt in sinning against knowledge be given up to greater *hardnesse*. If the light that is in thee be darknesse (says Christ) how great is that darknesse? Therefore the more light a man hath, and yet goes on in works of darknesse, the more darknesse that man will be left unto, even to a reprobate mind in the end.

Thirdly, it will procure thee to be given up to the worst of sins, more then another man; for God when he leaves men, makes one sin the punishment of another, & reserves the worst for sinners against knowledge. These *Gentiles*, when they knew God, they worshipped him not, God gave them up to the worst of sinnes, whereof they were capable, as unnaturall uncleannesse, &c. But these are not sins great enough for thee, that art a sinner of the Christians, to be given up to drunkennesse, or adultery, &c. otherwise then to discover thy rottennesse, these are too small sins; but thou shalt be given up to *inward profanenesse of heart*, (as Esau was, having been brought up in a good family) to as not to neglect holy duties only, but to despise them; to despise the good word of God and his Saints, and to hate godlinesse and the appearance of it; thou shalt be given up to contemne God and his judgments, to *trample under foot the blood of the Covenant*, or else unto devilish opinions; Those other are too small to be punishments of thy sinne: For still the end of such an one must be *seven times worse then the beginning*, as Christ sayes it shall; if thou wert a drunkard, a swearer, or an uncleane person before; and thy knowledge wrought some alteration in thee, thou shalt not haply be so now at thy fall, but seven times worse; profane, injurious

to Saints, a blasphemers, or derider of Gods wayes & ordinance.

Fourthly, when thou comest to lay hold on mercy at death, thy knowledge will give thee up to more despaire, then another man. Knowledge, though when it is but newly revealed, it is an help; yet not made use of, turnes against the soule, to wound it, & to work despaire; and this both because we have sinned against the means that should have saved us, as also because such as sinne against knowledge, sin with more presumption; and the more presumption in thy life, the more despaire thou art apt to fall into at death. Therefore *Esay 59. 11. 12.* what brought such trouble, and *roarings like Beares* upon these Iewes? and that when salvation was looked for, that yet it was so far off from them, in their apprehensions? *Our iniquities (say they) testifie to our face, and we know them.* Now sins testifie to our face, when our conscience tooke notice of them, even to our faces, when we were committing them; and then also the same sinnes themselves will againe testifie to our faces, when we have recourse for the pardon of them. Therefore thou wilt lye roaring on thy death bed, & that thou knowest them, will come as an argument, that thou shalt not have mercie. As ignorance is a plea for mercie, *I did it ignorantly, therefore I obtained mercie*, so *I did knowingly*, will come in as a bar & a plea against thee, therefore I shall not have mercie.

Fifthly, both here & in Hell it is the greatest executioner & tormenter. In this sence it may be said, *Qui auget scientiam, auget dolorem*: He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow, as *Solomon* speaks: for knowledge enlargeth our apprehension
of

of our guilt, and that brings more feare and torments. *Have they no knowledge, vwho eate up my people? Yes, there is their feare (sayes David.) Therefore Heb. 10. 28. after sinning after kuowledg, there remaines not onely a more fearfull punishment, but a more fearfull expectation in the parties consciences. And this is the worrne in hell, that gnawes for ever, Light breeds these wormes.*

But then you will say, it is best for us to be ignorant, and to keep our selves so.

I answer, no: For to refuse knowledge will damn as much as abusing it. This you may see in *Prov. 1. 23. Ye fooles (sayes wisdom you that hate knowledge, Turne, and I will poure my spirit upon you, & make knowvn my words to you. Well, ver. 24. they refused and would none of his reproof: Therefore sayes God, I will laugh at your calamitie: That is, I will have no pittie, but in stead of pittie, God will laugh at you; and vwhen your feare comes, I will not answer, because ye hated knowvledge, ver. 29. So as this is as bad. There remaines therefore no middle way of refuge, to extricate thy selfe at, and avoide all this, no remedy but turning unto God; otherwise thou canst not but be more miserable then other men; yea and this must be done speedily also: For thou having knowledge, God is quicker in denying thee grace, and in giving thee up to a reprobate mind, then another man, who is ignorant. He will wait upon another that knowes not his will & wayes, twenty, thirty, forty yeares, as he did upon the Children of the *Israelites* that vvere borne in the wildernesse, and had not seene his wonders in *Egypt*, and at the red sea: but those that had, he soone sware against many of them, that they*

they should never enter into his rest. Christ comes as a swift witnesse against those to whom the Gospel is preached, Mal. 3. 5. he makes quick dispatch of the treaty of grace with them. Therefore few that have knowledge are converted when they are old, or that lived long under the meanes. And therefore you that have knowledge, are engaged to repent, and to turn to God, and to bring your hearts to your knowledge, and that speedily also, or else your damnation will not only be more intolerable then others, but the sentence of it passe out more quickly against you. Therefore as Christ sayes, Ioh. 12. 36. Whilst you have the light, walke in it: For that day of grace, which is very clear & bright, is usually a short one. And though men may live many naturall dayes after, and enjoy the common light of the Sunne, yet the day of grace, and of gracious excitements to repent, may be but a short one.

AGGRAVATIONS OF SINNING Against Mercie.

ROM. 2. 4. 5.

Or despisest thou the riches of his goodnesse, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance?

Buo

But after thy hardnesse and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy selfe wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God?



His is the last and most weighty aggravation, which the Apostle puts in the measure of the Gentiles sinfulness (which in the former Chapter he had, *verse 29.* pronounceth full before) to make it fuller yet: *Their sinning against mercies*, and despising the riches of Gods goodness, patience, and forbearance, the hatefull evill and iniquity whereof, can be better no way set out and illustrated unto mens consciences, then by a display of the riches of that goodness which men sinne against. My purpose therefore is to unlock and carry you into that common treasury of ourward mercies, and leade you through the severall roomes thereof, all which doe continually leade you unto repentance; That then reflecting upon our ungratefull waste, and abuse of so many mercies in sinning, thereby our sinnes, every sinne, the least, may yet appeare more sinfull unto us, *who are lesse then the least of all those mercies.* Know then, that besides that peculiar treasure of unsearchable riches of grace laid up in Christ, *Ephes. 2. 7.* (the offer of which neglected and despised, addes yet to all that sinfulness, a guilt as farre exceeding all that which shall be spoken of, as Heaven exceeds the Earth.) There is another untold Mine of Riches the Earth is full of, as the Psalmist

mist tells us, (*Psal* 104. 24.) and the Apostle here, which these Gentiles only heard of, and which we partake of all as much as they. As there are *riches of grace* offered to you, which can never be exhausted; So there are riches of patience spent upon you, which you will have spent out in the end; The expence of which, cast up, will alone amount to an immense treasure, both of guilt in you, and of wrath in God, as these words inform us.

To helpe you in this account, I will

1. In generall, shew what *Goodnesse*, or Bountie *Patience*, & long suffering are in God.

2. That there are *riches* of these spent upon all the sons of men.

3. That these all *leade men to repentance*. And then

4. I will expostulate vvith you, and aggravate your sinfulness, in going on to *despise* all these by unrepentance, as the Apostle here doth.

First, in that God is said here to be *Good*, or Bountifull: 2. Patient, or *forbearing*: 3. *Long-suffering*, they seeme to note out three degrees of his common mercies unto men.

First, he is a *good*, or a *bountifull* God: for so, as goodnesse is here used, I exegetically expound it: For though it be true, that *goodnesse* & *bounty* may differ; yet when *riches of goodnesse* are said to be communicated, it imports the same, and is all one with *Bounty*; And such is God. And all those noble and royall qualifications and properties, which concur to make one truly *good*, and *bountifull*, doe meet and abound in him,

him, in all those good things which hee doth bestow; and are found truly in none but in him; so that it may be truly said, that *there is none good but God*, as Christ sayes of him.

Now *Bounty*, in the generall, which is in God, may be thus described:

It is a free, vvoling and a large giving of what is meerly his owne, looking for no recompence againe.

To explain this, that you may see that all these conditions are required to true goodnesse, and all of them to be found in God only.

1. He that is *Bountifull*, hee must be a *Giver*, and Bestower of good things, and all he bestows, it must be by way of gift, not by way of recompence unto, or by desert from the party hee bestowes all on: Therefore Christ sayes, *Luke 6 33.* that *to doe good to those who have done, or doe good to us, is not thank-worthy*, nor is it *Bounty*. But God is therefore truly good, because hee simply, meerely, and absolutely gives away all which hee bestowes: For hee was not, nor can any way become beholden to any of his creatures; nor had formerly received any thing from them, which might move him hereunto; so *Rom. 11. 35.* *Who hath first given him, that hee may recompence him againe?* Nay, untill He gave us a being, we were not capable of so much as receiving any good thing from him.

2. He who is termed *Good*, or *Bountifull*, all that he gives away must be his *owne*; And so all which God bestowes, it is his *owne*. So *Psal. 24. 1.* *The Earth is the Lords. The ground wee tread on, the place wee dwell in; Hee is our Landlord.* But is that all? For the house may be the *Lords*, when the furniture is the *Tenants*: There-
fore

fore he further addes, *And the fullnesse of it is his* also : That is, all the things that fill the World, all the furniture, and provision of it both, All the moveables. (So *Psal. 50. 11. 12.*) The cattell and the fowles upon a thousand hills are mine, sayes hee ; And also all the standing goods, the corne and Oile (which you see and plant) are mine, *Hos. 2. 9.* yea and the Psalmist in the same 24. Psalm, adds further, that *they who dwell therein are his* also : Not the house and furniture only, but the Inhabitants themselves. And this, by the most sure, and most soveraigne title that can be, better then that of purchase, or inheritance, of and from another : for he hath made them ; *All is thine, because all comes of thee*, sayes the same David, *1 Chro. 29. 11. 12.* And all things are not only [of him] but [through him] *Rom. 11. 36.* That is, they cannot stand nor sublist without him. Even Kings, (the greatest & most bountifull of men) their bounty is but as that of the clouds, which though they showre downe plentifully, yet they first received all from the Earth below them.

3. He must give largely, it is not Bounty else. Now, God is therefore said to be *rich in goodnesse*, because he is *abundant* in it. So we finde it, comparing, *Psal. 33. 5.* with *Psal. 104. 24.* in which it is said, that *the Earth is full of his goodnesse*, and *his riches* ; which we may judge of, by what hee sayes in the 27. verse of that 104. Psalm, of what an House hee keepes ; and what multitudes hee feeds. *All these* (saith the Psalmist) *wait on thee.* that thou mayest give them meate, and thou openest thy hand, and they are filled with good. King Ahasuerus, to shew his bounty, made a Feast to his chiefe

chiefe Subjects, but it was but for halfe a yeare, & not to all: Some few halfe yeares more would well nigh have beggard him; But God doth thus continually. The greatest and most bountifull of men, when they would expresse the largest of their bounty, speake but of *giving halfe of their Kingdomes*; (so Herod, and he did but talke so too,) But God bestowes whole *Worlds and Kingdomes*, as *Daniel* speakes, *Dan. 4. 35.* and gives them to whom he please.

4. He that is bountifull, must give all he gives freely, & willingly. Which, though I put together, yet may imply two distinct things; As first, that hee that gives, must be a *free agent* in it, who is at his choice, whether he would give any thing away or no. The Sunne doth much good to the world, it affords a large light, and even halfe the world at once is full of its glory; yea and all this light is its owne, nor borrowed, as that of the Moone and Starres is; yet this Sunne cannot be called good or bountifull, because it sends forth this light *necessarily and naturally*; And cannot choole but doe so; nor can it draw in its beames. But God is a free giver, he was at his choice, whether he would have made the world or no; and can yet when he pleaseth, *withdraw his Spirit and face, and then they all perishe.* *Psalm. 104. 29.*

Secondly, it must be *willingly* also: That is, no way constrained, nor by extraction wrung from him, who is to be called Bountifull. A *willing mind* in matter of bounty, is more accepted then the thing. *2 Cor. 8. 12.* Now of God it is said, *Dan. 4. 22.* that he gives the Kingdomes of the world to whom he will, and none swayes him, or can stay his hand,

hand, ver. 35. yea hee gives all away with delight. So Psal. 104. 31. having spoken of feeding every living thing, and of other the like workes of his goodnesse, throughout that Psalm, hee concludes with this, *God rejoyceth in all his workes* : That is, doth all the good he doth to his creatures with delight; It doth him good (as it were) to see the poore creatures feed.

Last of all, *looking for no recompence* for the time to come. This is another requisite in *Bounty*. Sayes Christ, Luke 6. 34. *If you give to receive againe, as sinners doe, this it not thank-worthie* : but ver. 35. *so doth not your Heavenly Father* : For (sayes he) Doe good, and hope for nothing againe, so shall you be like your Father; and then you shall shew your selves true Children of the [most High.] In which word, he insinuates a reason why God gives all thus; because he is so great, and so High a God, as nothing we doe can reach him; as David speaks Psal. 16. 2. *My goodnesse extends not unto thee* : He is too high to receive any benefit by what wee doe. And even that thankfulness he exacts, he requires it but as an acknowledgement of our duty, and for our good, Deut. 10. 12.

And so much for the first, namely, what Goodnesse & Bounty is; And how God is truly Good, and he onely so. But this attribute of his, and the effects of it, he exerciseth towards all our fellow Creatures; and did to Adam in Paradise. But now to us vvard, (as the Apostle speaks) namely, the sons of men, now fallen, he extendeth and manifests a further riches, namely, of *patience & long-suffering*, which the Devils partake not of, the good Angels and other Creatures that sinned not,

are incapable of. For as Christ sayes *Luke 6.35.* In what he bestowes on us, *be kind* to such, as are *evill and unthankfull.* Mercy is more then goodnesse, for Mercie alwayes doth respect Misericordie: And because all the Creatures are subject to a Misericordie, *Rom. 8.20.21.22:* of bondage and vanitie, therefore his tender Mercies are over all his workes. But yet patience is a further thing then Mercie, as Mercie is than goodnesse) being exercised, not towards miserable Creatures only, but towards sinners; and includes in it more, three things further towards them.

1. Not only that those persons he doth good unto doe offend, and injure him; But that himselfe also is exceeding sensible of all those wrongs, and moved by them, and also provoked to wrath thereby; It is not patience else. So in the *2. of Pet. 3.9.* It is not slacknesse (sayes he there:) *God is not slack:* That is, hee sits not in Heaven as one of the Idol-gods, that regarded not what acts were kept here below; Or tooke not to heart mens carriages towards him; but is *long-suffering, or patient;* That is, he apprehends himselfe wronged, is fully sensible of it; *is angry with the wicked everie day, Psal. 7.11.* he hath much adoe to forbear, even when he doth forbear, and letteth them alone; he exerciseth an attribute, a vertue towards them, namely, *patience,* in keeping in of his anger; which is as to keepe fire in ones bosome.

But secondly, this is not all; He doth not simply forbear, and restraîne his anger; but vouchsafeth that time he forbears them in, that they might repent in it; And his mercies, as meanes leading

leading to repentance. So it followes in that, 2 Pet. 3. 2. But God is long-suffering to us-ward, and his long-suffering hath this in it, not willing that any should perish, but come unto repentance. So also Rev. 2. 21. it is called space to repent. And all the blessings he vouch saferh, he gives them as meanes and guides to leade them to repentance, as here. And Mat. 18. 29. Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. That is, give me a longer day and space to pay the debt in, and bee willing to accept it when I bring it, and let me lye out of prison, that I may be enabled to pay it.

Thirdly, there is yet a further thing in his Patience, namely, a waiting, and expectation that men would come in, and repent. So Luke 13. 17. These three yeares have I [come seeking] fruit, but have found none: There was an expectation, a longing, a desire it would bring forth fruit, Oh when shall it once be, sayes God, Jer. 13. last?

In the last place, that other attribute of long suffering, which is the third, is but as a further degree of Patience; but patience lengthened out farther; That is, when God hath beene thus patient, hath forborne and waited for their comming in, and that not for three yeares, but haply thirtie fortie yeares, and still they turne not; His patience then begins (as we would thinke) to be (as it were) worne out, and his anger begins to arise, as if he could forbear no longer; (as it was towards that tree, Why cumbereth it the ground? Cut it downe) yet he goes on to spare a man another yeare, and many more yeares still after that; and endureth with much long suffering (as Rom. 9. 22.) the vessels of wrath, endures to wonderment above measure,

beyond all expectation , all patience, as it were; This is *long-suffering*.

The second generall head is , that there are [*Riches*] of this his Goodnesse , &c. expended on us.

It is a *rich* goodnesse , patience, and long suffering: *Rich in themselves* , in regard of their abundance, as they came from him; And *Rich* also in regard of their *precious* usefulness unto us , as they may be improved by us.

First, *in themselves* they are *Rich* : if wee consider what is expended, all that while, Hee layes out, not simply his *power* to sustaine and uphold all things, and to maintaine us freely; So to doe, is nothing to him. For whilest he doth but so, nothing goes out of purse, or is detracted from him : (as I may so speake) Hee feesles not the expence either of power, providence, &c. All this cost him but words : For he *upholds all* , *creates all by the word of his power*, Hebr. i. And thus to maintaine the Angels, and to have maintained all mankind before they fell , had been no more. But (my brethren) whe now he maintains us sinners, not simply *power* goes forth from him, but his *glorie* is expended, & taken from him, and for the while wasted, detracted from; He loseth, at present , every day infinitely by us, and he is sensible of it ; every sinne takes glory from him, *robs* him, as he himself complaines : That he *who made the World, upholds it*, (keeps it together , as the hoopes doe the barrell, it would fall to pieces else, to nothing; *in whom all live*, [*Iohn i. 19.*] as fishes in the Sea , yea upon whom all live) that He should live *unknowne* , *unthought of*, *unserved* ; yea disgraced, dishonoured
in

in the World, and have this world lost to him; as it were: And sinne, the Devill, wicked men, to have all the glory from him, to be exalted, to carry the whole VWorld afore them: This spends upon him, hee had neede of Riches to doe this.

Secondly, consider the multitude of sinners, that thus spend, and live upon these Riches, no lesse then all the World: Hee had need of multitudes of patience in him: Hee forbearcs not one, but all and every one. Wee looke upon one man, and seeing him very wicked, we wonder God cuts him not off; we wonder at our selves, that God did not cut us off before this, when once our eyes are opened: Nay then cast your eyes over all the World, and stand amazed at Gods forbearance towards it. Take the richest man that ever was, to have millions of men in his debt, it would undoe him soone. All the World are in Gods debt, and runne still in debt every day more & more, and yet hee breaks not, nay breaks not them.

Nay thirdly, to manifest this abundance yet more, consider not only the multitude hee forbearcs, but the time hee hath done it: To forbearc much, and to forbearc it long: Hee hath forborne, and beene out of purse from the beginning of the world, since men were upon the face of the earth, five thousand yeares and a halfe already; And how long it is yet to the day of Iudgement, wee know not; And yet ye see, Hee is as *patient*, and as *beuntifull* now in the latter dayes of the World, as hee was at the first. Did that greatest Convert that ever was, that had not liyed past thirty yeares in his

sinfull estate (for hee was young when he held the stoners clothes that stoned Stephan) and yet *was the chiefeſt of ſinners*, did hee yet (as himſelfe ſayes) thinke himſelfe a patterne of long ſuffering, 1 Tim. 1.16. thought it a great matter God ſhould forbear ſo long? what is the whole World then? if he, being but one ſmall poore veſſell, was ſo richly laden with the riches of Gods patience, how is this great bark of the World then fraught; that hath gone over ſo vaſt a gulfe of time? How much of theſe his riches have beene laden in it?

And then fourthly, adde to this the expenſive prodigality of all theſe ſinners in all ages; Every ſinner ſpends ſomething; and how lavith are men of oathes? *All the thoughts of mens hearts from their youth up, they are evill, and only evill and continually*: And how much then hath every man ſpent him? every ſin is a debt.

In the ſecond place, this is a rich goodneſſe and patience, in regard of the *preciousneſſe and uſefulneſſe* of his goodneſſe.

Fiſt, *precious*, in regard of what all theſe manifeſtations of his goodneſſe and forbearance coſt, even the blood of his Sonne, who as a Lord hath bought and purchaſed all wicked men; Their lives; and their reſtitution; all that time that here they live; and all the bleſſings and diſpenſations of goodneſſe, which here they doe enjoy. Chriſts mediation ſo far prevails with God for all the World, that it puts a ſtop to the preſent proceedings of juſtice, which otherwiſe had ſaid of all, *that day thou ſinneſt, thou dyeſt*. So that as Chriſt may be called the *Wiſedome & the power of God*, ſo alſo the *patience and the long-ſuffering of God*.

For,

For, for his sake, & through his meanes, it is exercised; God would not shew a drop of mercy, but for his Sonne. Which, I take, strongly and clearly intimated, in that dealing of his with the Jewes, (*Exod. 23. 20.* compared with *Exod. 33. 2. 3. 4. &c.*) Immediately after God had given the Law, (by the rules and threatnings whereof, God the Father in his government was to proceed) and after they had transgressed it. He there declares, that he could not goe *vwith them*: For (according to the rules of his government) *hee should destroy them*; but his Angell, *hee would send them*, even Christ; he might shew them mercy, for hee was the purchaser of it: And that hee was that Angell, appeares, in that God tells them, *ver. 21. that his name was in him*, who also would destroy them, if they turned not and repented, according to the rules of his Law, the Gospell.

And *precious*, secondly, *to us*, in regard of the *usefulness*, this goodnesse and long-suffering tend and serve unto. This makes this stock of time afforded you, by Gods goodnesse, to be riches indeed, that *it is space to repent*; (*Rev. 2. 21.*) Not a time of reprimall only, but to get a pardon in; And this makes all the good things we enjoy to be precious indeed, that they are meanes, *leading us by the hand to repentance*. Rich it is, because if your time bee laid out as it ought, you may obtaine those farre surpassing *Riches of glory*, reserved for hereafter; Win, and gaine Christ by it, and all his *unsearchable Riches*. All things receive their worth and valuation from what they tend to, and from what depends upon them, and the use they might be put to.

A Bond, a mans will, which in it selfe (as it is a piece of parchment) is not worth one shilling; yet an estate of many thousands may lye and depend upon them. And so time, is not simply precious in it selfe; but in regard of the opportunities of it. And accordingly, in those ordinary passages of our lives, doe we, more or lesse estimate and count time precious, as the businesse allotted to it, is of more or lesse consequence: When a matter falls out that concernes us, and requires dispatch, and wee are cast into straits of time about it, we count every minute precious: So this *time* of ours (which is the chiefe and principall of that stock, put into our hands by Gods patience) being *space to repent in*, to gaine and trade for Heaven with, in this respect every minute of it, is as much as Heaven is worth, and one houre of it may be as much as all the time you are to spend for ever, after this life ended; Every minute hath an influence into eternity. And how ever you may account it, yet the balance of the Sanctuary thus estimates your time, calls it *your money*: *why lay you out your money for what is not?* &c. *Esay. 55. 2.* (i.e.) This precious day of grace, and thoughts, cares and endeavours which are brought forth and minted in this time allotted) these are your money, you might purchase Heaven by. And thus it hath beene esteemed by holy and godly men; who yet had lesse need to value it, having done the maine businesse it was allotted for. David in the 39. *Psal. 13.* being brought very low; *Oh spare me a little, that I may reover my strength, before I goe hence, and be seene no more.* So *Hezekiah, Esay. 38.* how did he sue for; and when he had obtained fiftene yeares; how did he

blesse

blesse God? Ver. 20. Or if by this you judge not so, thinke with thy self, what at the day of death thou wouldst account of an houre, of a moneth, a yeare? What others, who have laine gasping, vould have given a World for time againe, (as I have heard one crying day and night, *(call time againe)*) or if not then, Oh what in Hell!

The third thing I am to shew, is, that all this goodnesse, *patience, & forbearance*, is afforded towards you as a meanes, and helpes to bring you to repentance. *Acts 17 26. 27. 28.* God (sayes the Apottle there) *bath allotted to men, both their times to live in, and also their places of abode and habitations*; all richly furnished with blessings to uphold their lives and beings. And to what end are both these thus afforded? That they *might seeke the Lord, if by groping after him* (even as men in the darke) *they might haply finde him.* But men being in the darke, and destitute of guides to bring them unto God, may yet be as far of finding him as ever. Therefore adde but the words of my text, to what the Apottle sayes there, and we see, that this goodnesse of God rakes us by the hand, and *leads us to repentance*; To turne from sinne unto God, and so to finde him. And thus lead are you unto God, by the help of three severall guides, which each after other sweetly leade you, and point you out to this.

First, all this goodnesse beares witness to your hearts of a gracious hand that extends it selfe in all these; Therefore in that 17. of the *Acts*, he subjoynes, *God is not far off any of us.* That there is a good God bestowes all things on you, is a thought
lyes

lyes at next doore of all his blessing, not farre off. Yea *they all* (sayes the Apostle to the same Gentiles, *Acts 14.16.*) *doe beare witnes of him*, (though they went on in their owne vvayes) yet (sayes he there) *God left not himselfe vvithout vvitnesse*; that is, an impression on their hearts that his good hand bestowed all on them, when he filled their hearts vvith food and gladnesse.

Secondly, His goodnesse having brought thus God to mens thoughts, then your owne consciences take you, and leade you downe into your selves, and beare vvitnesse, that you by vvalking in your owne vvayes, doe nothing but provoke and offend this good God. So *Rom. 2. 15.*

And then thirdly, there is an indelible principle common to all men to *love those who love them*; vvhich after the two former have brought you hitherto, point you to *Repentance*, as the conclusion. [*Shall we goe on to sinne against this good, so good? retorne evill for good?*] Is not this a naturall necessary consequent out of all these, to say as they, *Let us therefore feare the Lord, vvho giveth us the early and the latter raine*, as it is *Ier. 5. 26. 27?* And though men are said to *know this*, in the text, yet the meaning is, they doe not thoroughly and effectually consider thus much, so as thereby to be brought to Repentance, yet however there is such a vvitnesse of all this in all mens hearts, and thus are they led on unto Repentance, would they see their way and follow their guide.

The use shall be an use of exhortation (as here the Apostle carryes it) with men sinfull and impenitent, for going on to sinne against all this
mer-

mercy ; Together with an aggravation of their
 sinfulness hereby. Men, if young, doe usually
 take the advantage of this their precious time,
 (which out of so much long suffering is vouchsafed
 them) and of all thole precious opportunities,
 and blessings they enjoy, to improve them
 only, in reaping and gathering in to themselves
 the pleasures of sinne ; making the time of youth
 their harvest of sinning, and yet thinke to escape
 by repenting, afterwards ; and then when old,
 after they have already enjoyed a long and a faire
 Sun-shine day to turne to God in, and to have
 sowne much seed to the Spirit, the comfort where-
 of they might now have reaped ; yet as they have
 altogether neglected so to doe all their youth,
 so they goe on to doe so still, whilest they
 see they have any day left, be it never so neare
 the setting : and doe choose rather desperately,
 to venture their estate in the World to come,
 upon the riches of his mercy pardoning, (though
 without all care and endeavour to change their
 hearts or lives) upon the experience they have
 had of the riches of his mercy forbearing them
 in this World, thinking to finde him the same
 in both.

With all such, let me reason a little, and from
 the *Riches of Gods goodnesse, patience, &c.* spent
 upon them, at once expostulate with them ; for
 their impenitency, and aggravate to them their
 sinfulness, and also, if possible, prevaile with
 them to goe on to despise it thus no longer. And
 if there be any principle of common ingenuity,
 any sparke (I doe not say of grace, but of good-
 nesse of nature) left unextinguisht, me thinks it
 should

should affect you, and doe some good on you ere I have done.

And to that end consider a little, and compare together Gods loving kindnesse towards you, and your unkind dealings towards him.

To begin at the very beginning of thy being: how much riches of goodnesse were there laid & buried in thy foundation? When the first corner-stone was laid, when thou wert made a man, (besides the cost which hath beene spent upon this building since) and, cursed as thou art, even that very foundation was laid in bloody *iniquities*, in which thou wert *conceived*; And the very materials of soule and body, thou consistest of, being tempered with sinne, *like the stone in the wall, and beame out of the timber*, cry out every moment to God against thee, as Edom did, *Rase it, rase it, even to the very ground.*

Consider how but the other day thou wert meere nothing, and when an infinite number that never were nor shall be, were in as great a possibility of being as thou, (for when hee made this World, he could have laid it aside wholly, and created millions of other Worlds) yet, he chose thee to have a roome in this, but one World, (for hee meanes to make no more) and this world could have stood without thee, and did before thou wert, and shall doe when thou art gone; yet hee called thee forth out of nothing, and by his Almighty power bade thee stand forth when there was no need of thee. I say he chose thee to have a being: for as there is an election of things that are to salvation, so out of things that were not unto being. And wretch that thou art, if thou repentest not,

not, thou destroyest what God hath made, and hadst better have kept nothing still, and never have peept out, or else to skulk into thy first nothing againe, for thou art lost, better never to have beene borne.

Secondly, Consider yet more goodnesse. Thou mightest have beene admitted into the lowest forme of creatures, have beene a worme, a flea, a flye, which we men fillip and crush to death at pleasure; But to be made a *Man*, created one of the States, Barons, Lords of the World the first houre, admitted into the highest order, crowned a King in the wombe, as *David* sayes of man, *Psal 8.5. made a little lower then the Angels*, but crowned with glory and honour; *made to have dominion over all the workes of his hands*. The one halfe of thee is more worth then a whole World, [thy soule], as *Christ* sayes, that went to the price of soules; upon which God hath bestowed an eternity of being, and made it the picture of his face, his Image, when other creatures doe weare but his footsteps. And thy body the other peece, and indeed but the Case, the Sheath, (as *Daniels* phrase, and the *Chaldee* hath it, *Dan. 7.15. of thee*, what a curious workmanship is it? *Wonderfully and fearfully made*, as *David* sayes, *Psalms 139. 15. curiously wrought in the lower parts of the Earth*: So there he calls the womb; because as curious workmen, when they have some choice peece in hand, perfect it in private, and then bring it forth to light for men to gaze at; So God out of a teare, a drop, hee hath limmed out the Epirome of the whole world; the Index of all the creatures. *Sunne, Moone, Starres, are to be found in thee. (Ecl. 12.2.)*

And

And yet wretch as thou art, thou art with all the Epitome of Hell, and broughtest into the World with thee, the seeds and principles of all the villanies that have beene acted in the World, and if thou repentest not, thou hadst better have beene a Toad, or Serpent, the hatefallest of creatures; And wouldst change thy condition with them one day.

Thirdly, being a man, hast thou all thy members that belong unto a man? It is because *hee wrote them all in his booke, Psal. 139. 16.* If he had left out an eye in his common-place booke, thou hadst wanted it; Is not that a mercy? Aske the blinde. If thou hadst wanted those windows to looke out at, thy body would have beene a dungeon, the world a prison. If a Tongue (*which is thy glory*) or an eare, thou hadst lived among men, as a beast among men. And yet when God gave thee all these, what did he but put Weapons into an enemies hand? For hast thou not used all these, *as Weapons of unrighteousnesse*? Inso much as the tongue, but one member, is called a *world of iniquitie* by the Apottle; And if thou repentest not, thou hadst better (as Christ sayes) have entered into the World without an eye, an eare, a Tongue, then with these goe for ever into Hell.

Fourthly, when thou wert taken out of the wombe, (where thou didst remaine, but whilest thou wert a framing) what a stately Palace hath hee brought thee into, [the World] which thou findest prepared, and ready furnished with all things for thy maintenance, as *Canaan* was to the Children of Israel; A stately house thou buildedst

not

not, trees thou plantedst nor, a rich Canopy spangled, spread as a Curtaine over thy head, hee lets up a Taper for thee to work by [the Sun] till thou art weary, *Psal. 104. 23.* and then it goes downe without thy bidding, for it knows its going downe, *ver. 19.* and then he drawes a Curtaine over halfe the world, that men may goe to rest, thou causest darknesse, and it is night, *ver. 20.* An house this world is, so curiously contrived, that to every roome of it, even to every poore village, springs doe come as pipes to finde thee water. So *Psal. 104. 10. 11.* The pauement of which house thou treadest on, brings forth thy food, *ver. 14.* Bread for strength, Wine to cheere thy heart, Oile to make thy face to shine, *ver. 15.* Which three are there synecdochically put for all things needfull to strength, ornament, and delight. The very Chambers of that house (as David calls them) drop fatnesse, and water the Earth, *ver. 13.* He wheelles the Heavens about, and so spins out time for thee, every moment of which time brings forth some blessing or other, and no one is barren. Therefore *Psal. 65. 12.* the yeare is said to be crowned with goodnesse: A diadem of goodnesse encircles it round: And yet thou hast filled this world thou thus art brought into, with nothing but rebellions, as hee hath done with blessings, and hast piled up sins to Heaven; And thou hast pressed all these armies of blessings thou findest the world filled with, to fight against their Maker, under the devils banner, whom thy wickednesse sets up as the God of this World. And as the yeare is crowned with goodnes, so thy yeares with wickednes, & no moment is barre, but all thy imaginati^{ons} are euill continually.

And yet wretch as thou art, thou art with all the Epitome of Hell, and broughtest into the World with thee, the seeds and principles of all the villanies that have beene acted in the World, and if thou repentest not, thou hadst better have beene a Toad, or Serpent, the hatefulllest of creatures; And wouldst change thy condition with them one day.

Thirdly, being a man, hast thou all thy members that belong unto a man? It is because *hee wrote them all in his booke, Psal. 139. 16.* If he had left out an eye in his common-place booke, thou hadst wanted it; Is not that a mercy? Alke the blinde. If thou hadst wanted those windows to look out at, thy body would have beene a dungeon, the world a prison. If a Tongue (*which is thy glory*) or an eare, thou hadst lived among men, as abeast among men. And yet when God gave thee all these, what did he but put Weapons into an enemies hand? For hast thou not used all these, *as Weapons of unrighteousnesse?* Insomuch as the tongue, but *one member*, is called *a world of iniquitie* by the Apostle; And, if thou repentest not, thou hadst better (as Christ sayes) have entered into the World without an eye, an eare, a Tongue, then with these goe for ever into Hell.

Fourthly, when thou wert taken out of the wombe, (where thou didst remaine, but whilst thou wert a framing) what a stately Palace hath hee brought thee into, [the World] which thou findest prepared, and ready furnished with all things for thy maintenance, as *Canaan* was to the Children of Israel, A stately house thou buildedst

not

not, trees thou plantedst not, a rich Canopy spangled, spread as a Curtaine over thy head, hee lets up a Taper for thee to work by [the Sun] till thou art weary, *Psal. 104. 23.* and then it goes downe without thy bidding, for it knows its going downe, *ver. 19.* and then he drawes a Curtaine over halfe the world, that men may goe to rest, thou causest darknesse, and it is night, *ver. 20.* An house this world is, so curiously contrived, that to every roome of it, even to every poore village, springs doe come as pipes to finde thee water. So *Psal. 104. 10. 11.* The pauement of which house thou treadest on, brings forth thy food, *ver. 14.* Bread for strength, Wine to cheere thy heart, Oile to make thy face to shine, *ver. 15.* Which three are there synecdochically put for all things needfull to strength, ornament, and delight. The very Chambers of that house (as David calls them) drop fatnesse, and water the Earth, *ver. 13.* He wheelles the Heavens about, and so spins out time for thee, every moment of which time brings forth some blessing or other, and no one is barren. Therefore *Psal. 65. 12.* the yeare is said to be crowned with goodnesse: A diadem of goodnesse encircles it round: And yet thou hast filled this world thou thus art brought into, with nothing but rebellions, as hee hath done with blessings, and hast piled up sins to Heaven; And thou hast pressed all these armies of blessings thou findest the world filled with, to fight against their Maker, under the devils banner, whom thy wickednesse sets up as the God of this World. And as the yeare is crowned with goodnesse, so thy yeares with wickednesse, & no moment is barre; but all thy imaginati^{ons} are euill continually. Yea

Yea thou hast sinned against Heaven and Earth, &c. subjected the whole creation unto vanity, laden the Earth, and filled it so with wickednesse, that *it groanes*, the axeltree of it is even ready to crack under thee, and the ground thou treadest on to spue thee out.

Fiftly, since thou camest into the World, what a long time hath God suffered thee to live in it? hee hath not spared thee three yeares only, (as he did the figtree) but thirty, forty. And when thou si it madest bold to thrust forth thy traiterous head into the World, Death (which sinne brought into the world with it) might have arrested thee, and told thee, this world was no place for thee, for Hell is only our owne place, *Mat. 1. 25.* thou shouldest have beene executed the first day. And is not so much time of ease from punishment infinite mercy? Cast but your thoughts upon the Angels that fell, that have beene in Hell from the first moment of their sinning, doe but thinke with your selves, what they would give to have so much time, cut out of that eternity, they are to runne through, and to have it set apart for ease, and to be void of torment; if the rich man in Hell, made it such a great suit, and counted it so great a favour to have but one drop of water (which could but for a little while (scarce more then a moment) have cooled and eased, not his whole body, but the tip of his tongue only) how much more would hee have thought it mercy, to have lived so many yeares againe as he had done free from torment? What is it then for thee, to live so many yeares free from the falling of the least drop of that wrath, whereof the full vials should have

have beene poured out many yeates agoe? The same Law was out against us, which was out against the Angels: *That day thou eatest, thou shalt dye the death*: What put the difference? The Apostle tells us, his *long-suffering to us ward*: Not to them; for in *Chap. 2. 4* hee had told us that hee spared not the Angels which fell, but posted, and threw them into Hell, as soone as they had sinned.

Sixtly, But further, In the 6. place; Is this all? Hath it beene barely a time of ease given thee a time of reprivall? No, it hath beene more, *space to repent*, and so to obtaine thy pardon in, *Rev. 2. 21*. And as it hath beene more than ease of torment unto thee, so also consider it hath beene more than slacknesse in him that hath afforded it to thee, as the Apostle there doth tell us. It is not that he hath tooke no notice of thy offending him, but he is sensible of every idle thought, of every oath, vaine word, and as the Scripture tells us, He is pained at the very heart, in so much as hee repents that ever he made thee; (*Gen. 6.*) Hee is angry with thee every day thou risest, every time hee lookes on thee, when ever he meets thee going into the Taverne to be drunke, the whorehouse to be uncleane, when hee meets thee reeling in the streets, hee hath much ado to forbear killing thee, as he had to forbear *Moses* when he met him in the Inne. Hee is ready to have a blow at thee, and it should not need be any great stroke, or fetching his arme about; if hee did but blow on thee, thou wert consumed. To suffer thee to live, doth therefore cost him much riches of patience; but to cut thee off, need cost him nothing; He can

doe that with ease. But further, all is joyned with a *willingnesse* that thou shouldst *repent*, and *not perish*, as that place tells thee. It were much mercy for a Traytor to be reprimed, to have a lease of his life for twenty yeares, though there were no hope nor meanes of obtaining his finall pardon after that time spent, and this also, though but for one treason; and though all that time of his reprimall hee carries and behaves himselfe never so obediently. But unto thee, this time hath beene more than a longer day of life, and putting off the execution (which for the guilt of that first rebellion should have been acted on thee in the womb) it hath beene *time to repent in*: And yet hath not this time of thy reprimall made thee so much the more rebellious? And hast not thou spent all this time in making up the measure of thine iniquity full? And hath it beene willingnesse only in God that thou shouldest not perish? yea more, joyned with waiting also, when it should once be, thinking the time long, as longing and desiring that thou wouldst repent, that he might pardon thee. Thus *Ierem. 13.* last, God expresseth himselfe, when shall it once be? yea and consider how many dayes of payment have been set, and how many promises made, and broken all by thee, and yet still hee waiteeth unto wonderment.

Thou receivest presse money at thy Baptisme, when thou didst promise to forsake the devill and all his workes, and to begin to serve him, when thou shouldst begin to discern betweene good & evill. But no sooner did the light of knowledge dawne in thy heart, but thou beganst to fight against him; And thy first thoughts to this day have beene

beene only and continually evill. And then
 (haply) in thy younger yeares, before thou hadst
 tasted of the pleasures of sinne, he gave thee an
 inkling, by meanes of thy education, of his good-
 nesse towards thee, and of that happinesse to bee
 had in him, and thou hadst the first offer of him,
 ere thy tender years were poysoned by the world;
 And he hath dealt with thee againe and againe,
 both by his Word and Spirit; Not waited only,
 but wooed thee; and hath beene a suiter to thy
 heart long; And I appeale to your hearts, how
 many promises you have made him, of turning
 from all your rebellions to him, after such a Ser-
 mon, which was brought powerfully home; in such
 a sicknesse, and in such a strait, thy conscience
 knowes full well; And still God hath made tryall
 of thee; and given thee longer day; And though
 thou hast broke with him againe and againe, yet
 hee hath forborne thee againe and againe, and
 hath waited this twēty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty years
 when thou shouldest come in, and be as good as
 thy word, and still thou hast failed him. And yet
 behold and wonder, and stand confounded at the
 riches of his long suffering, that after so many
 yeares expence, and promises broken by thee, ex-
 pectations failed in him, and many mockeries of
 him, after all this hee is yet willing to accept of
 the remainder, if thou wouldst spend the rest of
 the time, left thee in the flesh, according to his will,
 as the Apostle speakes, 1 Pet. 4. 3. even to lose
 principall, use, and all, for what is past, and re-
 quires but the same composition was propoun-
 ded the first day; yea and not only so, but with

promise to become a debtor unto thee, to bestow farther riches on thee than ever yet thou sawest, or art able to conceive; yea and all this, when hee could have his penny worths out of thee another way, and lose not one farthing by thee, but by punishing thee in Hell, recover all *to the utmost*.

Neither, seventhly, hath it beene barely and simply an act of *patience* and *forbearance*, though joyned with this willingnesse, thou shouldst not perish, or meerly a permissive act of suffering thee to live. But God shewes forth yet more riches of goodnesse, joyned with this long suffering; *in him ye live, and move, and have your being*; and dost thou live in him only? Nay thou livest on him also, upon his cost and charges; *I have hung upon thee* (sayes David) *from my mothers wombe*. And consider what thy life is that of so small a bottom, he should spin out so long a thred! Had hee not drawne it out of his own power, as the spider doth her web out of her owne bowels, it had beene at an end the second minute; To maintaine that *radicall moisture*, that Oile that feeds the Lampe, and light of thy life; that *radicall balsamum*, this is as great a miracle as the maintaining the Oyle in the cruze of the poore famished widow. And further yet, hath he maintained thee only? Nay more, hath he not defended thee, rooke thy part, protected thee, rooke thee under his wing; as the Hen doth her Chickens, to shelter thee from those many dangers thy life hath been exposed unto? Otherwise, how many wayes, ere this, hadst thou beene snatch away out of the Land of the Living? Is thy case, the case of the *fig tree* only, which before wee

mentioned, that when God cryed, *Cut it downe*, another cryed *spare it*? But there have been many have cryed, *Cut thee downe*, and God hath cryed, *spare Thee*: There is never a minute, but the devills would have had a blow at thy life, as he longed to have had at *Iabs*. That thou, a poore lump of flesh, shouldst walke through, and in the midst of such an host of fierce and cruell enemies, whose hearts are swelled with malice at thee, and God should say to them all, concerning thee, as he did to *Laban* concerning *Iacob*, *Touch not this man*. And yet if thou wert not liable to their malice and power, yet consider how many dangers and casualties, besides, thou hast beene kept in, and from; as falls, drowning, killing many wayes; How often have the arrows of death come whisking by thee; rooke away those next thee, (haply of thy kindred, bro her, sister, yoke-fellow, of the same house, family with thy selfe) and yet have missed thee? And if wee looke no farther than these dayes of mortality we have lived; Two great plagues in this Kingdome, how have the most of us all here survived, and now the third is increasing and growing upon us? To have our lives in such *deare* yeares of time, when to *have our life for a prey* is mercy enough, as *Ieremy* told *Baruch*! That these arrows should flye round about us, over our heads, and misse us! That Gods arrests should seize upon men, walking, talking with us, and spare us! How often, many other wayes, hath thy neck beene upon the block, and the axe held over, and yet hath fallen besides! To goe no farther than thy owne body, the humours thereof, if God should not restraints them, would over-

flow and drowne it, as the waters would the earth, if God should not say to them, *stay your proud waves*. And when in a sicknesse they have beene let out, yet God hath kept a sluice, that so much should breake forth, and no more, which should purge, & wash the body, and make it more healthfull, as the overflowing of Nilus doth. And when then thy body hath been brought low and weake, and like a crazy rotten ship in a storme, taking in water on all sides, so that all the Physitians in the world could not have stopt those Leakes; yet hee hath rebuked wind and sea, hath careened, mended thee, and launched thee into the world againe, as whole, as sound, and strong as ever; And God hath said, as *Iob 33.* that *Thou shouldest not dye*. In a word, if thou consider but what thy life is, & the dangers it is subject to, thou wilt acknowledge it as great a wonder to preserve it, as to see a glasse, that hath beene in continuall use, gone through many hands, and hath had many knocks, and falls, to be kept for forty, fifty, sixty yeares whole and unbroken: God hath carryed *thy life in his hand*, as it were a candle in a paper lanthorn in a strong windy night, and kept it from being extinct, when as we often see in many, that a litle cold comes but in at a litle cranny, & blowes their candle out, as *Iob* speakes.

And eighthly, how have these yeares and houres of thy time been filled up with goodnesse? And with how many comforts? For a Traytor to live, though but upon bread and Water all his dayes, what favour is it? And so hadst thou lived all this time, never so miserably, though all thy dayes thou hadst eaten thy bread in darknesse,
and

and hadst had much sorrow vwith thy sicknesse , (as Solomon speakes.) Some there are , who , as Iob speakes , Iob 21. 15. *Dye in the bitternesse of their soules, and never eat with pleasure, scarce seeing a good day;* And if this had beene thy case, yet this is infinite mercy. Even whatsoever is on this side Hell, is mercy. Lam. 3. 22. say they in the worst estate the Church was ever on Earth, *It is thy [mercies] not mercy only , but multitude of mercies are shewne us , that we are not consumed , because his mercies are renewed every morning.* If at the brink of Hell, and not in, it is mercy. But hath he not all this while filled thy heart with food and gladnesse, as the Apostle speaks, *Acts 14. 17?* It were infinite to goe over the particular kinds of common comforts, which God vouchsafes men here: Not halfe the riches of his goodnesse is yet told: It would require an age to make an Inventory of them. Hast a house in the world to hide thy head in, and keepe thee from the injuries of the weather? (which was more than Christ had) God he is thy Landlord , (though it may be thou payest him no rent ;) He it is that *builds the House* , Psal. 127. 1. Hast a bed to lye upon? He makes it, especially in thy sicknesse , Psal. 41. 3. Hast thou sleepe (which is the nurse of nature , the parenthesis of all thy cares and griefes ,) he rocks thee asleepe every night ; And as he gives thee a House, so hee gives thee rest , Psal. 127. 2. It is God keeps off those gnats of distracting cares, and griefes, & thoughts, and terrors of conscience , would huzze about a man , and keepe one continually waking. And when thou sleepest , *is thy sleepe pleasant to thee ? God makes it so, Ier. 31. 26.*

Hast thou cloathes to cover thy nakednesse? reade old *Jacobs* Indentures, *Gen. 28. 20.* and thou shalt see by them whose finding they are at; if *Thou wilt give me rayment*, that is one of his conditions mentioned. Yea: doe thy cloathes keepe thee warme? Even this is attributed to him, *Iob 37. 17.* He fills thee, feeds thee, *spreads thy table*, serves thee, *fills thy cup*, as *David* describes his goodnesse, *Psal. 23. 5.* and gives thee thy *meat in due season*; And hath not failed thee a meales meat, but thou hast had it at thy *appointed time*, as *Iob* speaks. And hast thou health? which is the salt to all these blessings, (without which thou wouldst say, *thou hadst no pleasure in them*;) Hee is the God of thy health, and keeps off diseases. *Exod. 15. 26.* *I will put none of those diseases on thee; I am the Lord who bealeth thee*; That is, preserve thee from them which else would seize on thee. And these mercies hee vouchsafeth unto you that are the poorest, and loades you with these and the like benefits every day.

But hast thou *Riches* added to these, and abundance? *The blessing of God maketh Rich, Prov. 10. 22.* Though thou hadst them by birth, yet hee made those friends, and parents of thine, but feoffees in trust for thee; They were no more, it was God who bequeathed them *Ecclef. 2. last.* Or whether thou hast got them since by thine owne industry, it is hee *gives thee power to get wealth, Deut. 8. 18. Prov. 12. 24.* and out of a *small estate maketh men great, Iob 8. 7.* It is hee by his providence hath stopt the secret issues and draynes of expence, at which other mens estates runne out; hath stopt *that hole in the bottome of the bag*, as the
Pro-

Prophet speakes. And with these riches hath hee given thee a heart to use them. This is as it is a farther mercy, Eccles. 5. 19. and Chap. 6. 2. so also from him, as it is noted there.

Or hast thou Credit (which is better than riches? So sayes Solomon, Prov. 22. 1.) it is God who gives it, not thy wisdom, parts, or worth: Eccles. 9. 11. *Favour is not alwayes to men of skill:* That is, not acceptation of what they doe, without a farther blessing from God. Therefore besides the gift of wisdom, he gave a further promise of honour also unto Solomon, 2 Chron. 1. 11: It is God who fashions mens opinions. The Apostle prayes to God *his service might be accepted of the Saints*, though no service was like to be more acceptable, for it was the gathering and bringing in of almes and reliefe to them. It is he rules mens Tongues, bids men blesse, as well as he bade Shimei curse: And hee hath kept thee from such grosse sinnes, which, as flies, would have putrified the oyntment of thy good name, who also conceales those thou hast committed, and hides thee from the strife of Tongues, Job 5. 21.

Hast thou friends, or doe any love thee? (wherein much of the comfort of our lives consists, and therefore David sayes of Jonathan, 2 Sam. 1. 26. *Thou wert pleasant to me*,) it is God gives favour in mens eyes: So hee did Ioseph, Gen. 39: 21. If any man or Creature doth thee a kindnesse, hee toucheth their hearts, (as it is said of the men who clave to Saul) and visits for thee; He made the Egyptians beyond all reason the Israelite friends, gave them favour in their eyes, as the Text tells us. And hence, Gen. 33. 10. Jacob sayes, *He saw the*

the face of God, in reconciled Esaw face, for Gods favour appeared in his look. He put you into your callings, ranks, & stations, gives you all your skill, successe in them; The meanest of Tradēs, to Sow & Plough, and Thresh, they are from the Lord, who is wonderfull in working, (Esay 28. from the 23. to the end) even as well as the skill of the most curious Ingraver, Limbner, or Embroyderer (as of Bezaleel) the Scripture sayes, God was his Master, taught him. Hast thou enlarged parts and gifts for higher imployments? It is not thy birth, or age hath acquired them unto thee, Iob 32. 8. 9. Great men are not alwayes wise; Therefore it goes not by birth; Nor have the ages alwayes understanding, it goes not only by experience; But it is the inspiration of the Almighty. And hast a calling answerable to thy parts, to be a Scholler, and have thy minde enriched and ennobled with the best & choicest jewell the world hath, wisdom & knowledge; whereby the minde is elevated as much above other mens, as they are above beasts? God hath beene thy great Tutor, The minde of man is Gods Candle, and hee maketh wiser than a mans Teachers, as he did Moses in Egyptian learning, Daniel, David.

To conclude, hast thou comfort in all these? in riches, learning, credit, wise children, meat, drink &c. Hee puts in all the sugar, delight and pleasure that especially depends on him; even to fashion the heart to all these. As ayre lights not without the Sunne, nor wood heats not without fire; So neither doth thy condition comfort thee without God. And therefore Acts 14. 17 It is said, *He filled their hearts, as with food, so, with gladness.*

And

And besides all these, consider the many peculiar passages and turnings of his providence towards thee for thy good; The working of things together, ever and anon to doe thee a good turne; The packing and plotting all for thee, better than thou couldst have plotted for thy selfe; As thy reliefe in many streights, successe in many businesses; He *vvorks all our vvorks in us and for us*, as *Esay* speakes, *Esay 26.* hath hee not taken such speciall care and providence of thee, as if he had regarded no man else in the World?

And now when thou hast considered all, bethinke thy selfe withall a litle of thy dealings towards him: What have beene the effects and fruits of all this goodnesse? Hold up thy head man, looke God in the face. It is well yet, that shame begins to cover thee. How hath that his patience and long-suffering, vouchsafing thee space to repent, wrought with thee? How nigh to repentance hath it brought thee? Such is the perversenesse of mans nature, as *Salomon* tells us, *Eccles 8. 11.* That *because sentence against an evill worke is not presently executed, therefore the hearts of the sonnes of men are fully set to doe evill*: Because God defers punishing, they defer repenting; Thou thinkest to spend the most precious of thy time, and strength in sinning, and give God the dregges, the bottome, the last sands, thy dorage, which thy very selfe and friends are weary of, and all these blessings and comforts which God hath vouchsafed thee, how hast thou used them against him? This Oyle which should have beene fuell to thy Thankfulnesse, hath encreasd

creased the fire of thy lusts, and thy lusts have consumed them all, *James 4.* The riches he hath given, thou hast made Idols of, and sacrificed thy dearest morning, daily thoughts and affections unto, as God complains, *Ezek. 16.* from the 15. and so on: [His meat] (as at the 29 ver. he calls it) thou sacrificedst to thy Belly, which thou hadst made thy God; Thy strength to Women; The wealth he hath given you, you have made use of, but to live at a high rate of sinning, and to procure the sweetest bits, the daintiest and most costly sinnes; The edge of that sword of power God hath put into thy hand, thou hast turned against him and his, haply both his Children and Ministers; So that God, by giving thee all these, hath but made thee more bold to doe it; All his mercies have but fortified thy heart against him; *Doe ye requite the Lord thus, ye foolish people and unkind?* As Moses expostulates the case, *Deut. 32. 6.* as Christ said to the Jewes, *For which of all my good markes doe ye stone me?* So say I to you, for which of all his mercies is it, ye sinne against him with his owne weapons? To betray all hee gives you into the devils, his enemies hand? *What iniquitie did you ever finde in him, thus to deale?* God will one day thus expostulate his cause with you, and heape coales of fire upon all your Heads (if that you turne not) because you have rendred him evil for good; And all these mercies thus abused, will be as so many coales to make Hell fire the hotter, And to reason this point yet further with you out of the Text, and what arguments it will afford to worke upon you.

Consider, first, what it is thou doest; Whilest thus thou goest on, thou art a *Despiser of the riches of his goodnesse*: That which is opposite to goodnesse, must needs be transcendently evill. What, art thou evill, because God is good? And so much the more evill, by how much the more he is good, surely there must needs be an unexhausted treasure of wickednesse in thee, which will also cause in the end a treasure of wrath in him; What and sinne against mercy, patience, long-suffering, added to goodnesse? Of all attributes, as the richest to the most glorious; for it is that he glories in: In the abusing of which, therefore he thinks himself most debased; Of all attributes the tenderest; What, kick against his bowels! So are his mercies called: Cast him no where else but there? To despise a mans wisdom, power, learning, is not so much as to despise his love; What canst thou imagine will become of thee, when thou comest to dye? What is it thou wilt then come to plead and cry for? O mercy, O mercy: Why wretch that thou art, it is mercie thou hast sinned against. Riches of mercy and patience abused, turnes into furie. I may allude to that speech, *1 Sam. 2. 25.* If a man sinne against his brother, the Iudge shall Iudge him; but if against God, who shall plead for him? So hadst thou sinned against any other attribute, Mercy might have pleaded for thee; but if against mercie it selfe, who shall?

Well, if thou goest on thus to doe so still, thou hast a *hard Heart*; It argues the greatest hardnesse of all other; That is the second. You use not (howeuer it comes to passe) to deale thus with the worst of men, sinners like to your selves; but

but to them that love you, you tender love again, *Luke 6.33.* and will you deale so with God? *Is it a small thing to wearie men, but you must wearie God also?* sayes *Esay 7.13.* Hee thought it infinitely lesse to abule men than God; but you carry your selves as men, to men, but as Devils towards God; Herein yee have not the hearts of men in you; Not principles of common humanity, whereby ye differ from beasts; The cords of love are called the cords of a man, *Hos. 11.6.* The spirit of man breakes, meltes under kindnesse; Beasts indeed ye use to prick with goades, but the cords of a man are the cords of love; No principle being more deeply engraven in mens hearts, than this, *to doe good to those who doe good to you, Mat. 5.46.* Nay, would ye had herein yet the hearts of beasts; *The ox knows his owner, the asse his masters Crib, but my people have rebelled against mee.* A sinne so much against nature, that he calls upon those Creatures, who have no more than meere nature in them, *viz. the Heavens to stand astonisht at it.* But as nature elevated by grace, riseth higher than it self; So being poysoned with sinne, it is cast below it selfe; sinnes against it selfe, and the principles which are begotten in and with it selfe; if it were not so, how were it possible thou shouldst *bat him*, who never did thee hurt? And goe on to wound him, who weepeth over thee? And despise that in him most, which seekes to save thee? And load him with sinnes? *Amos 2. 13.* who loades thee daily with his mercies, *Psal. 68.19.*

There is a third consideration the Text suggests, to shew the fearfulnesse of thy sin in this respect;

pect ; And that is, that thou goest on every minute sinning & in impenitency, by despising his goodnessse , to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath ; To sinne against mercie , of all other encreaseh wrath; thou must pay Treasures, for Treasures spent. As thou lavishly spendest riches of mercy , so God will recover riches of glory out of thee : God will not lose by thee , but will reckon with thee in wrath for every offer of patience spent ; for every sand of long suffering that runs out , hee drops in a drop of wrath into his Vials, and it will prove a Treasure , such a Treasure as shall bring in an eternall revenue of glory unto God, of all his glory lost, and riches spent, with advantage ; Such a Treasure , as will aske an eternity of time to be spent upon thee , and yet be never emptied or made lesse ; And the longer thou goest on , the greater heap it will swell unto. And dost thou know and consider how fast this Treasure fills, and how much the longer thou goest on to adde to it, still the more thou addest, still the last yeare more than all the yeares before ? Every minutes impenitency adding to this heape and summe , as new figures added in a summe use to doe ; The first is but one, the second makes it Ten, the third an hundred , the fourth a Thousand, and what a summe will this grow to ?

Ay but thou wilt say , Tush, I am in prosperities in health, wealth , and ease, and to day shall be as to morrow, and much more abundant , *Esay 56. 12.* Well, but fourthly, consider out of the Text, that there will come a day at last , the morrow whereof will be a day of wrath: It is Treasuring up
now,

now, but is not brought forth till the day of wrath, till which day thou mayest goe on and prosper, as *Iob* giving us the reason why wicked men prosper here, sayes, Chap. 21. They are reserved to the day of wraths, in plurall because treasures are laid up against then; Thou art yet spared, because thy sinnes are not yet full, and that Treasure it not full, as the sinnes of the *Amorites* were not; And all this thy present prosperity fits thee but for Hell. So *Rom. 9. 22.* they are said to be vessells fitted for destruction, by long suffering. And so *Nabum* tells us, they are but as stubble laid out in the Sunne a drying, till it be fully dry, *Nabum. 1. 10.* that it may burne the better, and like grapes that are let to hang in the Sun hine til they be ripe, *Revel. 15. 16.* and so thou for the Wine-presse of Gods wrath.

But thy senselesse heart may hap to say, I see no such thing, and these are but threats, I thinke so; Therefore it is said in the Text, that it is a Treasure; Which, as Treasures use to be, is hid till that day comes, and then revealed, as the words have it. For though thou seest not this day a coming, yet God who sits in Heaven, sees thy day a coming, as *David* sayes, *Psal. 37. 13.* who is therefore said to see it, because himselfe sees it not; And it is a coming faster than thou art aware of it, *2 Pet. 2. 3.* Damnation slumbereth not, though thou dreamest not of it; Lingreth not; As an hie and cry, it is sent out, and is on its course, and will in the end overtake thee, and that when thou least thinkest of it, as a theefe in the night, when thou art asleepe, yet dreamest not

of it, 1 *Thef.* 5. when thou art least prepared
for it, as in the old World, when they were eating
and drinking; As God watcheth when his Child
is at the best and ripest, and then takes him; So he
will watch thee to take thee for thy neglect, at
thy worst, and give thee haply no time to
prepare; They goe downe to Hell in a moment.
Psal. 37. 9.

F I N I S.
